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ABSTRACT

Noting that in order to introduce and maintain writing across the curriculum programs in the schools English teachers must unite with colleagues to stress learning of all kinds, and that recommendations for the use of writing in content areas do not frighten away students who are apprehensive about writing, the articles in this focused journal issue explore the use of writing in content areas and existing programs. The essays deal with school and district programs, working with students across the curriculum, writing and language in the content areas, and writing beyond the curriculum. The titles of the essays and their authors are as follows: (1) "Writing across the Curriculum: The Marana Experience" (Yvonne Merrill); (2) "Sharing a Successful Writing Program" (Mark F. Goldberg); (3) "Writing across the Curriculum at the University of Arizona" (Diane Clymer and Duane H. Roen); (4) "The Writing Center as Center in Writing-across-the-Curriculum" (Diana George); (5) "Coherence and Commitment: Responding to Student Writing in the Disciplines" (Virginia Nees-Hatlen); (6) "Information and Visual Properties: a Matrix Representation" (Gene Washington); (7) "The Library Research Paper: For the Term, during the Term, and throughout the Term" (Samuel J. Rogal); (8) "Teaching Research Skills: Two New Research Texts" (Regina Rinderer); (9) "Fringe Benefits" (David C. Nelson); (10) "Language across the Curriculum" (Christopher Thaiss); (11) "The Arts in Language Arts: Activities Relating Visual Art to the Language Arts on the Elementary School Level" (Willet Ryder and Eleanor Ryder); (12) "The Language Arts and Music: Recent Research" (Ruth Zinar); (13) "The Writing Process in the Elementary Social Studies Program" (Frances B. Cacha); (14) "'Writing in the Social Sciences' by Joyce S. Steward and Marjorie Smelstor" (reviewed by Mary Katherine Ray); (15) "'Writing to Learn?' But We've Scarcely Begun" (James P. Beck); (16) "Writing and the Real World" (Kent Forrester); (17) "Corrections Personnel: Individualizing the Workshop" (Eleanor M. Hoffman); and (18) "Myth or Reality: The Value of English in the Working World" (Charles R. Duke and Ruth Ann Futrell). The journal concludes with a series of suggested class activities. (HTH)

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ARIZONA ENGLISH BULLETIN

WRITING ACROSS THE CURRICULUM

Volume 27 Number 1

Fall 1984

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ARIZONA ENGLISH BULLETIN - - - - - - - - A Member of the NCTE Exchange Agreement

The ARIZONA ENGLISH BULLETIN is a publication of the Arizona English Teachers Association, a nonprofit state affiliate of the National Council of Teachers of English. The BULLETIN exists to create effective statewide articulation of English and Language Arts teachers at all levels, to increase awareness of new ideas, programs, and movements in English, and to improve instruction at every level.

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Topics and deadlines for forthcoming issues are as follows:

Fall 1984:	Writing Across the Curriculum	(Sept.15,1984)
Winter 1985:	Reading and Writing Connections	(Nov. 1, 1984)
Spring 1985:	Teaching Literature and Creative Writing	(Jan. 15, 1985)

AEB welcomes manuscripts on these or other topics of interest to teachers of English and Language Arts at all levels. Manuscripts should be limited to 10-12 typed, double-spaced pages. Notes should be incorporated into the text (APA form) or typed following the text (MLA form). The editor reserves the right to make minor textual changes in the interest of clarity or space limitation. Send manuscripts to

Margaret Fleming, Editor
% Department of English
University of Arizona
Tucson, AZ 85721

Manuscripts will be reviewed and replies sent, usually within 6-8 weeks, but occasionally later, depending on the editor's teaching schedule and other responsibilities. Authors of articles that are published will receive two contributors' copies.

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CALL FOR PAPERS

While I am on sabbatical leave during the second semester of 1984-85, the Spring issue of the BULLETIN will have two guest editors, Marvin Diogenes and Clyde Moneyhun. Marvin and Clyde have worked together before on many projects. They have co-edited several editions of A STUDENT'S GUIDE TO FRESHMAN ENGLISH, published every year by the University of Arizona's composition program. Readers of the BULLETIN will remember that they also co-authored an article in the Winter 1984 issue.

Marvin and Clyde both have M.F.A. degrees in Creative Writing from the University of Arizona. Marvin has been managing editor of SONORA REVIEW, and Clyde has been Non-Fiction Editor for the literary magazine TELESCOPE. They both have a great deal of experience and interest in the teaching of freshman English.

While they have not decided on the exact title for the Spring issue, they invite articles on any aspect of the teaching of literature or creative writing. Here are some suggestions, which they hope will suggest others. MF

Designing a Poetry Unit
Teaching Haiku
Film and TV as Dramatic Literature
Writing Short Short Stories
The Uses of Metaphor in Writing
Overcoming Poetry Anxiety
Teaching Students to Write Plays
The Rhetoric of Poetry and Fiction
Applications of Reader-Response Theory
A Literature Curriculum for Junior High
From Narration to Exposition
Literary Terminology--How Much?
Student Poetry
Teaching (a particular novel, play, poem, story)
Writing Group Stories
A Junior Novel of Literary Merit
Writing about Literature
Literature for Special Students
Short Story as Rhetoric
New Ideas for Teaching Drama
Grammar and Poetry
A Literary Unit on (a particular theme)
Reading and Writing Occasional Poetry

Send manuscripts before January 15, 1985 to

Marvin Diogenes
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University of Arizona
Tucson, AZ 85721

FROM THE EDITOR

Several years ago, at the Conference on English Education, I was on the program of a session called "Women and the English Curriculum." There were four other women on the program and about the same number of people in the audience. We had a wonderful time sharing our ideas and insights, and I wouldn't have wanted to miss it, but one of the panelists made a point that I thought was valid. "What are we all doing here talking to each other?" she asked. "If these issues are important to us, we ought to be talking about them in other sessions, in other contexts."

It happens so often--the saved talking to the saved. The convinced designing elaborate arguments for the already persuaded. It's been true, I think, in the writing-across-the-curriculum movement. We (and by "we" I mean those of us committed to teaching writing) have been largely talking to each other. Even when writing-across-the curriculum programs have been instituted, it has usually been at the English department's instigation, and we had the burden of convincing them to support something important to us. And while of course we know that writing is important to everyone, not everyone has been eager to recognize that fact. (Anyone who has been convinced is now, by definition, one of us.)

I have two suggestions--both long-term, low-key methods--that I think may help us introduce and maintain writing-across-the-curriculum in our schools. The first is politic, maybe even political. We need to unite with our colleagues to stress learning of all kinds. Let's not let our students finish their education believing that knowledge is contained in a series of separate boxes. If writing is helpful in understanding math, for instance, surely reasoning is helpful in understanding writing. The facts about history or sociology can enhance understanding of literature. Nor do the lab sciences have a monopoly on the spirit of scientific inquiry. We need to reinforce these cross-curricular competencies whenever we can, both by precept and example.

We can also support our colleagues in their curricular objectives. Another offering in math, an enhanced fine arts program, a computer lab, an energy club--such things can work toward the benefit of all. We can let our students know we favor these things by becoming actively involved when possible, but certainly by talking them up. Running down the value of study in any area will not help a writing-across-the-curriculum program.

My second suggestion is that we try to sneak in recommendations for the use of writing without calling attention to WRITING, which raises anxieties in many. I try to do this in my secondary education methods classes, where I have students from all disciplines. I point out, for example, that having each student jot down an idea in writing before *beginning a discussion is a good way to focus attention and to make sure that students won't depend on just a few extraverts to come up with answers. In various lessons, I give directions such as "Make a list," "Have someone in your group record the ideas you come up with," "Take notes of what you observe," "Interview someone and report," and "Jot down any questions that you have." In none of these have I used the word "write," yet writing is called for. Another suggestion I give my students, in the guise of an all-purpose lesson plan, is that they have their students create a newspaper based on whatever they are studying. While this is particularly useful for social studies lessons, it can be adapted to science, fine arts, even math--how about a "Dear Pythagoras" column, or a cartoon featuring geometric shapes. I should think this subtle sort of suggestion might work well with colleagues in other disciplines, as we share ideas that worked. And it can all be done without using the word "writing," or implying that they should be assigning and grading a series of formal essays or research papers.*

One final suggestion. Since we are still, within the pages of this journal, talking to ourselves, perhaps we can reach out by passing on some of the articles. If you see something in here that you think your colleagues could profit from, by all means call it to their attention. There are so many good articles that it shouldn't be difficult. Enjoy your reading--and writing.

Margaret Fleming

WRITING ACROSS THE CURRICULUM

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Readers who are au courant with new technology or who have been following the typographical fortunes of the BULLETIN may be interested to know that this issue was typed on one of the English Department's new IBM PC computer terminals, using the EDIX/WORDIX word processing program, and printed on an Epson FX-100 printer. Having the computer available here in the office has made it much easier and faster to get the typing done. Lindy Botkin, our typist, is a graduate student in English Education. She has thus benefited from keeping up-to-date with developments in the field while doing the work.

Special thanks are due to Chris Arbuckle, our office computer expert, who has taught himself virtually everything there is to know about the machine and the program, and to Duane Roen, one of his early and promising pupils. Between them, they have been able to figure out the answer to every problem that has arisen. Both Chris and Duane have been unfailingly patient and courteous in helping Lindy and me to learn what we needed to know to produce and edit this text.

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WRITING ACROSS THE CURRICULUM: THE MARANA EXPERIENCE

Yvonne Merrill

How do you start a writing across the curriculum program? Are there any materials available? Can content area teachers be convinced of the value of such a program? What kind of support is needed?

These are a few of the questions which occur to teachers who feel the need to launch a multi-departmental approach to the improvement of student writing. Usually, but not always, the impetus comes from a beleaguered English department, facing a pervasive student resistance to writing encouraged by the departmentalized approach to education. This approach seems to foster the fragmentation of learning and the impression that English is the only area is which students must write. In some cases, as in the recent experience of Sunnyside High School, the impetus has come from another academic area--in this instance, social studies--in which students' composition skills are so woefully substandard that no evaluation of learning is possible; their papers are incomprehensible. The only solution is a multilateral attack to counter this compartmentalized psychology. Marana High School is in the fourth year of its program, and some of its experiences may prove of value to other schools and departments seeking the improvement of student writing skills.

School year 1980-81 saw the inception of Marana's writing across the curriculum experiment. Seeing the need to reinforce students' writing skills through all the disciplines, and having the opportunity to take advantage of the University of Arizona's Project Outreach personnel and funds, the Marana English department, headed by Mrs. Elsie Mann, launched the crusade to improve composition.

Before making a presentation to Assistant Superintendent Dr. Scott Foster, Mrs. Mann researched the current state of theory and practice in interdepartmental writing programs. She compiled materials by such authorities as Donald H. Graves, Toby E. Fulwiler, and Peter Elbow, to name a few, and she studied the programs at Ganado and Mountain View schools. In July, 1981, she presented a rationale to Dr. Foster for instituting a Marana program utilizing the Outreach people. She stressed the need to teach writing as a learning tool and an essential preparation for participation in the democratic process. She was successful, and the program was approved for the following year.

Several times in the fall, Mrs. Mann consulted Dr. John Mayher of the Outreach program; then the first step involving the entire faculty was taken. In January, the Writing Across the Curriculum Committee was established, and it comprised Mr. Wade McLean, principal, Mrs. Mann, and representatives from each of the other departments. Each of the content area representatives had at one time or another expressed an interest in student

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Yvonne Merrill is Language Arts Coordinator at Marana High School, Marana, Arizona.

writing skills and how to improve them. Their concern was the basis for their selection. It was to be the initial job of the committee to approach the other faculty members in each department to determine how they would like to inculcate writing as a learning tool into their classes. Dr. Mayher and his wife, Dr. Nancy Lester, both members of the Outreach team, came to Marana in March and met with the committee and the English department. They were able to help those spearheading the project to learn some diplomatic ways of showing their colleagues the advantages of having the students write more. Again they stressed how it improved the students' learning, and they went over the steps in the writing process. They emphasized the importance of pre-writing and rewriting.

During the district's 1982-83 in-service time in August, one day was devoted to workshops divided by discipline, K-12. Each workshop was moderated by a member of the high school English department, teamed with a content area teacher. Several of the materials collected by Mrs. Mann were distributed and discussed in each group.

One of these handouts was an excerpt from Writing in the Secondary School by Arthur Applebee (NCTE, 1981), which discusses the stages of the writing process and the importance of editing. To accompany it, the participants received a summary of Peter Elbow's writing steps using group process. Toby Fulwiler's article "The Personal Connection: Journal Writing Across the Curriculum" (Language Connections, NCTE, 1982) was distributed, and the uses of "intellectual" journals, as opposed to diaries, or class notebooks, were discussed. The techniques of using journals as the source of material for future formal writing, after the student has had the opportunity to explore and speculate, was stressed. Fulwiler also shows how to use journals to introduce a lesson, or to wrap up a lesson by pulling ideas together. He shows how they can be employed for problem solving or for recording lab notes, as well. Related to this article, and used with it, was Patricia and James Cunningham's article "SSSW, Better Content Writing," reprinted from Clearing House; this discusses the technique of Sustained Student Writing, and is specifically recommended to content area teachers. It requires that the student write for five minutes at the end of each period, summarizing the day's lesson; four follow-up activities are suggested, allowing the teacher several options for keeping the paper load down. Questions and discussion followed the distribution of these materials, and recorders in each group took down other suggestions forwarded by the participants. The minutes of these workshops were typed up and made available for distribution to any teachers interested.

In September, the committee met to determine the focus of the writing-across-the-curriculum program, deciding that an eclectic approach to writing was probably best. They suggested that teachers construct tests to include questions which would develop students' reading, thinking, and comprehension skills: specifically stated information questions, requiring complete sentence answers; sequencing questions; vocabulary definition questions; comparing and contrasting questions; cause and effect questions; inference questions; and synthesis questions, requiring students to draw conclusions. They also provided teachers with a list of terms appropriate to writing essay test questions--such as compare, criticize, define, interpret, prove, summarize, and trace--and gave definitions of them.

That school year also happened to be the second of two years devoted to a massive curriculum project, in which all areas, K through 12, were to describe their programs in detail and publish them in curriculum guides. Mrs. Mann was asked to make a presentation on writing across the curriculum at each district-wide content-area meeting, and teachers in each subject area then decided how they might write objectives for incorporating writing into their respective curricula. Obviously some areas showed more resistance than others, the feeling being that their primary objectives didn't lend themselves well to writing. Oddly, and fortunately enough, some of the strongest support came from the P.E. people, who had already discovered the usefulness of writing in reinforcing learning. These teachers came forward with many suggestions about how students could be required to write prose answers to questions regarding various sports and athletic activities; describe certain movements, such as batting; or to describe the action of play. Students who missed certain activities due to illness or failure to dress out could be required to learn about them though research and a written report. Teachers in academic areas such as science and social studies, of course, felt an urgent need to improve writing in their areas simply to be able to ascertain if students were grasping the content of their courses. These teachers were more concerned with acquiring techniques to teach writing skills. Mrs. Mann brought to each area meeting specific suggestions culled from various sources to answer their questions. She had been able to find materials especially tailored for their students' most pressing content problems: how to answer an essay question in the area, how to organize an essay, how in improve thinking skills, how to take notes, how to summarize, for example. The use of intellectual journals recommended itself to several areas, especially as a means of summarizing, and thereby pulling together a whole lesson. Math people, for instance, found this an appealing idea.

It must be mentioned here that a great deal of the success of the program has to be credited to the on-going support of the administration, particularly in these early stages. Dr. Foster had been instrumental in organizing the in-service workshops, and he appeared at all of the district area meetings, giving his support to Mrs. Mann and the writing program. Mr. McLean, principal, heads the Writing Across the Curriculum Committee and directs and supports all of its activities. He has asked all of his administrators to encourage the teachers they will be evaluating to include writing across the curriculum objectives among those on which they will be evaluated. Marana's experience seems to indicate that it is essential to have consistent administrative backing, which at the same time neither prescribes nor mandates. It must, however, suggest, support, and commend good practices.

Following the district curriculum meetings, the Writing

Across the Curriculum Committee members gathered all the suggestions from their respective departments, and Mrs. Mann compiled them to be used as future resources.

In the spring, Mrs. Mann shared the English department's correction symbols list with the department coordinators and asked if, as an entire faculty, teachers could come up with a universally agreed-upon list which everyone would use in correcting papers. This would accomplish two goals. First, it would insure that the meaning of the symbols would be reinforced in all classes, and second, it would make the students understand that teachers would usually expect rewrites of writing assignments. The coordinators took the suggestion back to their departments, and each department forwarded a list of its most frequently used correction symbols. From these, a core list of sixteen symbols was compiled that everyone agreed to use.

In the fall of 1983-84, the list of correction symbols was included in each teacher's orientation packet. It was in a small format on light cardboard, the weight of a file folder, which could be tucked into the teachers' grade books. A larger laminated version on a yellow background was placed in each classroom for display. (It might be noted that the school, not the English department, footed the bill for these materials!) During the orientation meetings, teachers were given the suggestion that they might award a grade only to the revised edition of a paper to encourage rewrites, or they might award a double grade, the higher one being recorded if the student were to rewrite the paper. They were again urged to request that students make complete sentence answers to questions on tests and worksheets.

The English department also invited the rest of the faculty to submit student papers for the writing CUES (Continuous Uniform Evaluation System) files. These files are kept on all students to document whether or not they have met their minimum writing objectives. Frequently, once students have achieved their CUES objectives, they fail to apply the skills to their daily writing. The English teachers felt it would impress on the students the importance of carrying over their learning to their other writing if they knew that all their teachers would be holding them accountable for practicing what they had ostensibly learned. Copies of the minimum objectives were distributed to the entire faculty, so they would know what skills they could expect to hold their students responsible for. Several teachers have taken advantage of this opportunity to reinforce CUES and to require more error-free writing. A few have even requested teaching materials from members of the English department for some CUES concepts.

At the first meeting of the Writing Across the Curriculum Committee, three goals for the year were defined: 1) to establish some means of evaluating the impact of the program, 2) to continue to lend support to the other faculty members, and 3) to assist other schools with ideas based on Marana's experience.

To accomplish the first goal, the committee discussed the possibility of comparing either the papers of individual students at three different points in the year, or comparing the work of individual students in all of their classes. The latter option seemed preferable as an indicator of the carry-over effect of the program.

To accomplish the second goal, the committee decided that early in the second semester all teachers sharing a planning period would meet, each bringing a paper, a question, or an observation to discuss with the others. A recorder would be present to write down their feelings about the success of the program so far and to list specific problem areas that still needed to be addressed. At this meeting the committee members expressed the general feeling that the outstanding positive result so far was that the students had undergone a significant change in attitude toward writing. Several representatives said that their students had come to view writing as a part of their total academic experience, and not just an aspect of their English studies.

To address the third goal, the committee decided that a paper such as this (describing the process Marana has undergone) should be prepared and made available to other interested schools. The need had already been felt because the Sunnyside social studies department, working with the University Outreach program, had already requested some assistance from Marana. The Sunnyside social studies chairman and Diane Clymer from Outreach met with the English and social studies people at Marana and planned for future exchanges of ideas, materials, and visitations.

The Marana social studies teachers are strong supporters of the writing across the curriculum movement, and several work directly with English teachers to team-teach certain portions of their curricula. The American history and American literature teachers especially try to coordinate their programs. The advanced placement American history students are allowed to write one research paper which they may submit to their American literature teachers as well. Several of the social studies teachers have expressed a willingness to confer with their colleagues in other schools to share their ideas.

In addition to this direct assistance from the social studies department, Marana's Writing Across the Curriculum Committee is offering other schools updated teaching suggestion lists upon request (printing budget allowing).

The final activity being undertaken this year (1983-84) is the dissemination to the whole faculty of nutshell writing tips via a monthly writing across the curriculum bulletin. So far the contributors have all been English teachers, but later bulletins will be solicited from members of other departments. Some of the topics include logical thinking, logical fallacies, how to make a writing assignment, how to answer an essay questions, how to write a process paper, how to use peer editing, and how to write a summary. These are simple, informal, easy-to-read one-page guides for teachers to use in teaching writing skills.

It's been a slow, arduous, sometimes uneven progress, but in general Marana teachers feel that the labor has paid off, and by and large, there has been far less resistance and more real enthusiasm than expected. Students are writing more; they are writing better; and most have come to view writing as a natural, integral part of their total learning environment. These gains have been made possible by the entire faculty and administration working together to foster a positive attitude toward writing.

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LEADERS IN EDUCATION, WELL-KNOWN WRITERS
TO SPEAK AT DETROIT CONVENTION OF NCTE

"Teaching English, 1984: Renaissance Art and Science" is the theme for this year's convention of the National Council of Teachers of English, Friday, November 16 through Wednesday, November 21 in Detroit. The meeting brings together teachers and supervisors of English at all levels of education, from the U.S., Canada, and other nations, plus education researchers, publishers, librarians, others concerned with education in the English language arts.

Members of NCTE will hear talks by authors and leaders in education from the U.S. and other English speaking countries. They will discuss problems, practices and research findings in the teaching of all aspects of English at some 200 program sessions and workshops. In addition, they will inaugurate a new president, Sheila Fitzgerald of Michigan State University, and take stands through resolutions on issues affecting the teaching of English.

Major convention sessions are scheduled for Friday, November 16, through Sunday, November 18. The Opening General Session Banquet, Friday night, features a keynote address, "Teaching English, 1984," by British educator and author John Dixon, whose recent research deals with development of writing abilities, analysis of achievement in writing, and adolescents' response to literature. Current NCTE president Stephen Tchudi of Michigan State University will preside.

Four convention luncheons Saturday, November 17, will feature the following speakers:

Ernest Boyer at the Conference on English Education Luncheon. Boyer is president of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, author of High School: A Report on Secondary Education in America, and a former U.S. Commissioner of Education.

Nathan Garner, vice president of Manhattan Cable, Inc., at the Secondary Section Luncheon. Garner, a former teacher, has held posts in media marketing and formerly supervised Home Box Office programming. His topic will be "The New Technologies and the English Teacher."

H.M. Hoover at the Books for Children Luncheon. Hoover is the author of Another Heaven, Another Earth, The Delikon and other science fiction titles for children and young adults.

X.J. Kennedy, poet and former English professor, at the College Section/Conference on College Composition and Communication Luncheon. Kennedy, whose poetry has appeared in The Atlantic, The New Yorker and other periodicals, will have as his topic "Somebody Stole Our Myths: A Conviction, an Epigram, and a Song about Teaching Writing."

At the Second General Session Sunday, November 18, Garth Boomer, president of the Australian Association of Teachers of English, will speak on the topic "Teaching English: Art and Science." Incoming NCTE president Sheila Fitzgerald, Michigan State University, will make inaugural remarks.

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SHARING A SUCCESSFUL WRITING PROGRAM

Mark F. Goldberg

Since the creation of the Shoreham-Wading River Central School District (Long Island, New York) in 1973, the staff and board of education have made the improvement of pupil writing an instructional priority. Teachers worked on a language arts curriculum, writing workshops were held, the faculty attended state and national conferences on writing--yet after three years of work the composition program was neither better nor worse than that of other middle-class school districts. There were some innovative programs in isolated schools in the district, but no distinctive district-wide efforts. In one school authors of books for middle school children spent a week discussing their works with students, and writing came alive for the children during "Authors' Week." One of our elementary schools turned itself into a publishing company for several weeks in the "Young Author's Program." Teachers and pupils wrote and bound books which were added to the school library collection. But there was neither a pervading spirit nor a guiding philosophy behind the "writing program."

In 1976, the superintendent called for more rigorous evaluation of composition in order to gather data on the strengths and weaknesses of the secondary writing program. Dr. Paul Diederich of Educational Testing Service conducted a full-day workshop the following summer. Ten teachers heard how _Measuring Growth in English_ was written and learned the Diederich evaluation system. For the next three years, students in grades six through twelve produced an essay each spring for a team of carefully trained teachers to analyze. Teachers scrutinized papers for ideas, organization, wording, flavor, usage, punctuation, spelling, and handwriting. Many teachers liked the Diederich scale; teachers began to talk to each other about student writing, and data were generated on student strengths and weaknesses. Yet the writing program remained only fairly good and teacher enthusiasm for writing remained only fairly high.

Bay Area Used as Model

In 1978, as chairman of the district's composition committee and a former college professor of English education, I began investigating the Bay Area Writing Project. I spoke by telephone to the national director, James Gray, and became convinced that something special had happened in Berkeley that could be replicated in my school district. Indeed, Bay Area techniques were already in use in about thirty locations around the country,

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Mark F. Goldberg is the liaison administrator to all district language arts committees, administrator of the Shoreham-Wading River Writing Project, and assistant principal in the district's high school. This article is reprinted from the _CSSEDC Quarterly_, 6, 1 (January 1984).

including Lehman College of the City University of New York. The New York City Writing Project emphasized process, teacher writing, and specific teaching methods, precisely what Shoreham-Wading River needed.

Professors Perl and Sterling of Lehman College visited the school district twice. I spoke to them at length; they made presentations to teachers and administrators, and they agreed to allow one of our teachers to attend their New York City Writing Project in the summer of 1978. I was utterly convinced that Perl and Sterling could train and deeply influence our teachers and agreed to a contract that made me the administrator of the Shoreham-Wading River Writing Project and them the workshop professors. They, of course, did the important work.

Professors Perl and Sterling trained twenty-one staff members in 1979 and another twenty in 1980. In 1981, two of the most highly trained teachers led a five-day workshop, which Professors Perl and Sterling followed with a ten-day advanced workshop. Thirty-two teachers attended at least one workshop, and many teachers attended both. In 1982, Perl and Sterling trained another twenty-nine teachers. Almost half of the district's staff now has Bay Area training and nearly three-quarters of the English and elementary teachers are trained. To make the point that writing is everyone's job, we have trained about twenty teachers in areas other than English and elementary.

Teachers have learned techniques such as active listening, process writing, writing groups, and editing. Professor Perl reviewed her own research on writing and Professor Sterling brought some of James Britton's work in England to district teachers. Such nationally known experts as Lucy Calkins, Nancy Martin, James Moffett, and Lee Odell have made presentations. Teachers soon saw that writing can be a limitless strategy for causing positive change in attitudes. They began to write more on their own and with students, they engaged students at all grade levels in writing groups, and they put into practice ideas they had learned during the summer.

Reba Pekala's first-grade students are "publishing" books at a rate that an assistant professor of English would envy. The children use invented spelling to write very early in the year. They meet with their teacher or aide to have their stories transcribed into standard English. Pupils write four stories, conference with the teacher to improve their writing, get help from other children, and finally choose their best effort for publication. There is constant talk about writing and editing. Every child knows about the progression from rough draft to finished product. They even use a rubber stamp on early versions that says, "ROUGH DRAFT." Informal editing groups operate each day, there is a steady stream of pupils to the teacher for help or decision-making, and the atmosphere in the room is serious and professional. Children can be heard commenting, "That's not in the right order" or "The words don't go with the picture." There is lively interest in writing, a real commitment to high standards for publication, and great pride in the carefully typed, pupil-written and illustrated books bound by parents and teachers. Some students publish eight or ten books a year, and a visitor to Ms. Pekala's room is overwhelmed by pupils wanting their books read. Just as important, Reba Pekala has influenced several other teachers who either signed up for training or learned from Reba.

Bay Area techniques are now popular at virtually every grade level. Len Schutzman's third graders keep journals, share their writing, meet in editing groups and discuss their writing. Diane Burkhardt and Hank Cheney use Bay Area groups of five or six students as the chief vehicle for producing and improving writing in middle school classes. Students learn that writing means sharing and rewriting. Teachers serve as models for groups at the beginning of the year, and one student group made a videotape that illustrates how a supportive writing group operates. Audre Allison's ninth graders meet in writing groups at intervals throughout the year, and Elsa Fredriksen's eleventh graders are taught to worry about process first and product later. Ms. Glassman's tenth graders know that they will produce very powerful writing in groups, that papers will go through several drafts, that students will be trained to help each other, and that the teacher will play an active role in the work of each group and the writing of each student.

Five-Year Plan for Success

Almost one hundred teachers and administrators have now been trained in Bay Area techniques in a district with just over two hundred teachers. Another ten or twelve have been influenced enough by colleagues to be considered trained. The district is now in the fifth year of a five-year plan. The first four years included summer training, follow-up visits each year by Perl and Sterling, teacher-led parent workshops, and a series of meetings in which teachers wrote or discussed composition ideas. Year five focuses on writing skills in all curriculum areas in a teacher-led workshop, and may even include students in the training. Teachers lead parent workshops and teach their peers. This process will continue and will make it possible for the district to train teachers informally and inexpensively for many years to come.

Currently, Professor Perl is conducting a research study which is intended to document how teachers trained in Writing Project techniques translate their knowledge into effective classroom practices. Perl and two research assistants spent a combined total of three hundred days in the district's five schools between September, 1981 and June, 1982. They observed classrooms, made case studies of students, interviewed students and parents, and read thousands of student papers. The ten teachers who volunteered to collaborate in this study were trained to keep journals of what they teach as well as to do case studies of how students develop as writers. Perl's ethnographic study is financed by the National Institute of Education and is expected to be an important addition to the literature on how public school children working with teachers trained in National Writing Project techniques develop as writers.

Confidence Increases

Teachers in Shoreham-Wading River feel confident about what they are doing with writing. They attend meetings and conferences and come back reinforced with the good feeling that they are well trained. Indeed, many of our teachers now make presentations at state and national conferences. Students in the district are beginning to behave like writers. They expect to write on topics they care about, to assert ownership of their work, to get real help from teachers and other students, to write successive drafts, and to complete papers of high quality. Writing is an active and essential part of the curriculum in every class in our three elementary schools and in every secondary English class. In fact, I am beginning to worry that writing is dominating the curriculum in some of our classes! Writing has become a significant part of the curriculum in many social studies classes and a part of the curriculum in such areas as art, business, and physical education. The Shoreham-Wading River Writing Project is vibrant, growing, pedagogically sound, and philosophically solid.

WRITING CENTER CAN SERVE THE WHOLE SCHOOL OR COLLEGE COMMUNITY, AUTHORS SAY

After more than a decade of experimentation under pressure, college writing centers are coming of age. Invented to cope with the influx of nontraditional students into higher education, these centers are now enlarging their roles and spreading into secondary schools. Writing Centers: Theory and Administration, just published by the National Council of Teachers of English, offers the first comprehensive view in book form of the theory behind these new programs for individualized writing instruction and the concerns involved in their day-to-day management.

In nineteen essays, leading specialists in writing labs and centers share their thinking and experience. They highlight the significance of the center in a time of "flux and tension in the humanities" and further change in the student population. The volume, which includes an extensive bibliography, was edited by Gary A. Olson, director of the Center for Writing at the University of North Carolina, Wilmington. Olson contributes articles on the psychology of writing centers and on establishing and maintaining such centers in two-year colleges.

(Writing Centers: Theory and Administration, edited by Gary A. Olson. 247 pages, paperbound. Price: $15.50; NCTE members, $12.00. ISBN: 0-8141-5878-1. LC: 84-16518. Available from NCTE, Urbana, Illinois. Stock No. 58781)

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WRITING ACROSS THE CURRICULUM AT THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA

Diane Clymer and Duane H. Roen

In the fall of 1977, the Faculty Senate at the University of Arizona charged a standing committee, the Committee of Eleven, to consider ways of improving the quality of writing at all levels and in all disciplines at the University. The Committee consisted of two students and eleven faculty members from a variety of disciplines (Psychiatry, Music, Agriculture, Nursing, Business and Public Administration, English, German, Surgery, Library Science, Speech Communication, and Chemistry). By the fall of 1979, the Committee was prepared to make its findings and recommendations available to the Faculty Senate, the University as a whole, and the public. Its 67-page report,"Are You Embarrassed by This Term Paper? Report on Undergraduate Writing at the University of Arizona," described in detail existing efforts on campus to improve students' writing skills. The document, however, also included five major recommendations, three designed to improve writing at higher levels in all disciplines and two designed to improve conditions in the Freshman Composition Program:

1. Each undergraduate and transfer student shall take a writing proficiency examination between the student's fiftieth and ninetieth hour of degree credit.
2. A University Writing Center shall be established to improve writing skills of undergraduate students.
3. A University Writing Board shall be established to advise the University Writing Center.
4. The student-teacher ratio shall be reduced in all sections of the freshman composition sequence.
5. Freshman Composition Program faculty members shall be eligible for tenure.[1]

The second major move to promote writing at all levels and in all disciplines occurred in the spring of 1981, when Charles E. Davis, Director of Composition at the University of Arizona, applied for and received a $274,000 grant from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. A part of those funds was used to send composition specialists to public schools and community colleges in

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the state to conduct composition in-service workshops for both teachers and administrators. During the 1981-82 academic year John Mayher (on leave from NYU), Elaine Caret (on leave from Catalina High School in Tucson), and Nancy Lester conducted workshops in all parts of the state. During the following year Michael Gessner (now the English chair at Prescott High School), Diane Clymer, and Duane Roen did the same. During the two years the two teams conducted more than 130 workshops in more than 80 schools throughout the state. While those workshops focused on many concerns regarding the teaching of writing, by far the most common workshops were those exploring strategies for promoting writing across the curriculum.

The rest of the Mellon grant money was used to "reemphasize and expand the University's commitment to a high standard of literacy for its graduates."[2] That commitment is the focus of the rest of this paper.

As a result of the Faculty Senate recommendations and the Mellon grant, there are today three universal requirements for all students taking baccalaureate degrees at the University of Arizona. First, all students at the University must take two or three semesters of Freshman Composition. Placement in an appropriate introductory course in that program is based two pieces of information: 1) the student's SAT, ACT, or TOEFL score and 2) a holistic score on an essay that the student writes once he or she arrives on campus. While most students take the 101-102 sequence, some are placed in our honors sequence (103-104), and some must take English 100 as a prerequisite to 101 and 102.

Second, all students at the University of Arizona must take an Upper Division Writing Proficiency Examination (UDWPE) after they have accumulated 45 credits but before they have accumulated 75 credits--that is, at the end of the sophomore year or at the beginning of the junior year. The UDWPE requires that a student write an essay in response to an article from a magazine, newspaper, or anthology. The examination also includes a set of questions regarding library research methodology. Faculty and administrators from all colleges in the University read and evaluate students' essays. Students take the UDWPE only once. Because the test is used to determine how well students have maintained writing skills developed in freshman composition classes, students need not pass the UDWPE. Rather, each student's rating on the essay (Excellent, Satisfactory, Unsatisfactory) is made available to the department in which that student is enrolled. The department considers the score and may review the student's performance on an essay rated "Unsatisfactory" in deciding whether that student is prepared to take that department's writing-emphasis course--the third universal degree requirement at the University.

Departments on campus recommend different options for developmental work in writing to students who are not yet ready for a writing-emphasis course. Recommendations vary according to individual students' strengths and weaknesses in various aspects of composition. One option is to require that students take an additional course that will help them develop a skill they are weak in. Students who need further practice in expository writing are sometimes encouraged by their departments to take English 207, Sophomore Composition. However, departments which offer lower-division courses with substantial writing components are encouraged to have their majors satisfy the requirement for additional developmental work within the department, since such courses allow students to develop their thinking and writing skills within the context of their particular discipline. The occasional student whose writing is still quite weak in grammar, sentence structure, and paragraph organization may be asked to audit English 100 or be referred to Pima Community College to take English 70, an intensive review of grammar and usage.

Other options for remediation can include tutoring and independent study in the areas of weakness. Free tutoring is available on campus to minority and economically disadvantaged students through the Writing Skills Improvement Center and to varsity athletes through the Writing Clinic, funded by the University's athletic program. As another alternative, a department might allow students to design a self-determined plan of studies and then review their work to ensure they are ready to enroll in the writing emphasis courses.

Finally, colleges may elect to work with the Department of Continuing Education to design special intensive writing workshops that will address common problems encountered by majors who received a rating of "Unsatisfactory" on the UDWPE. Last spring, the College of Pharmacy and the College of Nursing jointly sponsored one such intensive week-long seminar for those of its majors who were having trouble arriving at mature theses and organizing and developing their ideas in appropriate detail. The College of Education has considered offering a similar non-credit writing workshop for its majors that, in the course of eight two-hour evening sessions, would give students further instruction and practice in reading, analysis, discussion, and writing, possibly based on critical analysis of articles written in the discipline.

In short, there is a certain flexibility built into the program at this stage that encourages colleges to work individually with students whose writing and thinking skills need improvement. By assigning to these students developmental work that is designed and closely monitored by the students' major departments, three important purposes are served. Students can work to improve their writing skills using content materials from their discipline. Furthermore, they write for professionals from their discipline, people who are familiar with both the content and formats used in writing for that discipline. Finally, students more quickly come to realize that the ability to communicate effectively in writing is valued by faculty throughout the University and that the task of promoting literacy is not the sole province of the English Department.

The first two requirements of the new writing across the curriculum program are already in place; hence faculty and administrators at the University have, in recent months, begun to focus their efforts on implementing the third universal degree requirement: that each student take a writing-emphasis course designated by his or her major department. The 1983-85 General

Catalog defines writing-emphasis courses as "regular classes in an academic discipline" in which "at least half of a grade awarded is determined by written work appropriate to the academic discipline" (p. 42). Writing emphasis courses are not writing courses per se, as the Intercollegiate Writing Committee has pointed out in a memorandum establishing guidelines for designating departmental writing courses. Rather, these are content area courses, taught by professors in each department, in which students must demonstrate not only mastery of content material but also competence in handling the types of writing expected of them in their prospective careers.

In explaining the purpose of the writing-emphasis courses and describing the nature of the student's role as writer, the Intercollegiate Writing Committee has this to say:

> Each paper should be addressed to professionals in the discipline, with students writing as practitioners in the discipline on subjects appropriate to the course. The aim is to use writing as a means of synthesizing the subject matter of an advanced course.[3]

A minimum of 2500 words of edited prose, distributed among three or more papers, is required in a writing-emphasis course. Format and style must be appropriate to the discipline.

In short, if the first two composition requirements of the new program may be said to promote one of the main goals of a university, offering a liberal education, the writing-emphasis course requirement may be said to promote another, offering preparation for a career.

In order to implement the third phase of the writing program, many departments on campus are integrating a stronger writing component into courses required for the major; others already offer writing-emphasis courses that meet the criteria of the Intercollegiate Writing Committee. In the College of Mines, for example, the Department of Mining and Geological Engineering has designated Photogeology as its writing-emphasis course. Each week, students produce a 500-word report in professional memorandum form, based on their interpretations of aerial photographs used in geologic mapping. According to Carl Glass, Department Head, the purpose of these assignments is, in part, to provide students with practice writing technical reports for senior engineers; he points out to his students that engineers often use such summaries as the bases for less technical reports to clients who are not familiar with the field.

In the College of Pharmacy, the writing-emphasis course required of all majors is Introduction to Research Methodology and Drug Literature Evaluation. This year-long course is designed to teach students the principles and skills needed to evaluate medical literature. Considerable library work is involved in the preparation of three major written projects, which include answering clinically relevant questions about specific drugs used in therapy and preparing a brief abstract describing a new drug recently introduced on the market. Such assignments not only familiarize students with sources of current research available in the field, but also teach them principles of paraphrasing and summarizing and give them practice in writing focused, concise abstracts that are read by pharmacists, physicians, nurses, and other health care professionals.

Yet a third example is found in the Department of Russian and Slavic Languages in the College of Arts and Sciences. Written assignments for Russian Civilization, which has been officially designated as the department's writing-emphasis course, include three two-page essays for each of the examinations in the course as well as a semester paper. Associate Professor Alexander Dunkel, who teaches the course, often works on an individual basis with students as they prepare their written assignments. Throughout the semester, for example, time is devoted to in-class instruction on essay structure, research procedures, and bibliographic strategies. In addition, students are provided with structured written assignments designed to help them organize their essays. Well over fifty percent of the final grade for this course is based on writing assignments wherein, as Dunkel puts it, "content and style are of equal importance."

Another approach that is being adopted by various departments on campus, especially those that offer specialized fields of study within the major, is to designate more than one writing-emphasis course to accommodate diverse student needs. In the College of Education, for example, the general methods course in Secondary Education and the block of five special methods courses in Elementary Education have been designated as writing-emphasis courses for the two certification programs. Much of the writing in these courses is done for the purpose of learning or discovering, so students themselves are the primary audience.

In the writing-emphasis course for Secondary Education, students usually write four or five short papers and reports and submit a substantial final project in lieu of an examination. Written assignments vary in purpose as well as rhetorical mode and strategies of development: Some call for library research and interviews; others are based on classroom observations and personal experience. Since one focus of the course is evaluation, students also write brief critiques of microteaching done by their classmates. In addition, they practice writing test items, an exercise for developing precision, clarity, and parallelism of thought and syntax.

In the writing-emphasis courses for Elementary Education, students are required to write goal descriptions, rationales, critiques of lesson plans, evaluation of microteaching done by classmates, and summaries of journal articles. Thus they learn through writing and subsequent classroom discussion what constitutes an effective lesson and what tasks are required for implementing an objective. Moreover, these exercises prepare majors for the kinds of writing they must do when they student teach: lesson plans, tests, and evaluations of student work.

Many departments in the College of Arts and Sciences have also chosen to designate multiple writing-emphasis courses to accommodate majors with different specializations. Political

Science has identified ten such offerings for its majors, and Anthropology has seven. Indeed, for large departments such as Psychology, which has over 600 majors, offering a number of writing-emphasis courses takes into account other very practical considerations. Not the least of these is how to provide students with instruction and practice in writing for the discipline without putting undue strain on faculty and department resources.

The ramifications here are interesting to consider. Given the variety of approaches departments are taking as they implement the third phase of this University-wide writing across the curriculum program, it seems likely that many students may end up taking more than one writing-emphasis course in their home department or in other departments, depending on the courses they select for elective credit. Ultimately, this only serves to underscore the aims of the program: to demonstrate the value the University as a whole places on writing and to involve faculty in all disciplines in the effort to help students develop their writing and thinking skills.

Ideally, instruction in writing for different purposes and for a variety of audiences need not be limited to completion of these three universal requirements. In fact, some departments on campus (such as Child Development and Family Relations in the School of Home Economics and Soils, Water, and Engineering in the College of Agriculture) require that their majors take course such as Technical Writing in addition to Freshman Composition and the requisite writing-emphasis course. In addition, the writing-emphasis course can serve as preparation for more advanced, upper division course work with a significant written component. The College of Nursing, for example, requires that its majors take their writing-emphasis course, Introduction to the Nursing Profession and Research, the first semester of their junior year, and also that they take one of four elective writing-emphasis courses the following semester. In the Department of Soils, Water, and Engineering, students in the writing-emphasis course must solve mini-problems in engineering design and write up their results as proposals to prospective clients; this course work prepares them for the practicum course in agricultural engineering design the second semester of the senior year, a course in which they produce a major project in engineering design.

The commitment to writing across the curriculum at the University of Arizona is based on what we consider to be sound theoretical foundations. Among the voices guiding the commitment to literacy here is that of Albert R. Kitzhaber, who emphasized the importance of writing for sophomores, juniors, and seniors in all disciplines. He wrote in what has become known as the "Kitzhaber Report":

> ...the best--perhaps the only--way to keep students writing as well as possible after they have finished their freshman English course is to maintain a steady pressure on them to do so.[4]

Kitzhaber adds that:

> Ideally, the pressure to write well could best be exerted if every teacher of a class in which the writing of connected prose is appropriate would assign as much writing as he could, read and mark it as carefully as an English teacher would, and take the quality of the writing into account when assigning grades.
>
> Colleges that do not have such programs ought then to do the next best thing: identify several large courses in the sophomore, junior, and senior years in which it would be appropriate to assign more writing and which, taken together, enroll the great majority of students each year.[5]

Kitzhaber, understanding the nature of writing as a complex skill that needs to be practiced, also noted that:

> The behavior patterns involved in writing well are so numerous, so complex, so much a part of all the other aspects of a students' intellectual life that these patterns must be constantly reinforced during all a student's years of schooling if they finally are to become habitual.[6]

The commitment to literacy at the University of Arizona, then, is based on the assumption that students need to write often and about topics that are familiar and interesting to them. For freshmen those topics frequently evolve from personal experiences other than those gained in school. For students with advanced standing--those becoming deeply involved in specialized areas of study--writing needs to encourage students to explore topics in their majors. Writing needs to provide upperclassmen with opportunities to synthesize ideas in physics, psychology, art, agriculture, and other fields. Further, that writing needs to be prepared for experts in the fields in which students are studying. No one, for instance, knows how to synthesize ideas in mathematics better than a mathematician does. A mathematics student needs to have a mathematics professor examine the way that student thinks in mathematics if that student is to think like a mathematician.

The idea that students write about subjects with which they are familiar is not a new one. Plato noted it in Phaedrus.[7] More recently, Donald Murray has been fairly direct in supporting the idea: "...they must write papers on subjects with which they are familiar."[8]

We also look to guidance from Barbara Fassler Walvoord, who has authored an extremely lucid and helpful overview for those designing writing-emphasis courses in their disciplines. She comments that:

> ...writing is a skill. Like other skills, it

> can be acquired only through practice. Students must write regularly throughout each semester of their educational careers. Students develop writing skills slowly; a semester or even a year of required composition is not enough. From an extensive body of linguistic evidence about how people learn to write, we discover that teaching students to write well requires an effort across the curriculum and involves teachers in the various disciplines as well as those who teach the writing classes.[9]

The idea that students need to learn to write about concepts in their disciplines is gaining support from academicians in a variety of fields. Brent Bridgeman and Sybil B. Carlson, researchers at Educational Testing Service, recently conducted a survey of faculty members from 190 academic departments at 34 North American universities. One of their findings was that engineering professors believe that "the most successful practicing engineers are those who write well."[10] The physicist Jerrold Zacharias has put it bluntly in saying that: "If you can't put it into English, it means you don't understand it yourself."[11] And Michigan State University chemist C.G. Enke notes that "experimental work and elegant theories have no peer value until they have been put in manuscript form."[12] On our own campus, George W. Nelson, Associate Professor of Nuclear and Energy Engineering, has written that "an engineer who cannot write is about as useful as a bookkeeper who cannot add."[13]

The goal of the program at the University of Arizona is to help students to become useful members of their professions. The program is ambitious, and it will require tremendous commitments of time, energy, and resources to fully reach its goal. We are confident, though, that members of the University community will continue to make the commitments needed to ensure that writing across the curriculum works to improve students' literacy skills. We believe that any gains in literacy will benefit students not only as they begin to contribute to their professions but also to our democratic society.

NOTES

1. Committee of Eleven Recommendations: Seconded Motions to the Faculty Senate, "Are You Embarrassed by This Term Paper? Report on Undergraduate Writing at the University of Arizona."

2. Charles E. Davis, "New Program in Writing," a grant proposal submitted to the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, February 1981, p. 3.

3. Memorandum from the Intercollegiate Writing Committee, Frank K. LaBan, Chairman, TO: Deans, Department Heads, and Directors, RE: Guidelines for Departmental Writing-Emphasis Courses, March

2, 1982.

4. Albert R. Kitzhaber, *Themes, Theories, and Therapy: The Teaching of Writing in College* (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1963), p. 154.

5. Kitzhaber, pp. 154-155.

6. Kitzhaber, pp. 100-101.

7. Plato, *Phaedrus*, trans. W.C. Helmbold and W.G. Rabinowitz (Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, Inc., 1956), p. 13.

8. Donald M. Murray, *A Writer Teaches Writing: A Practical Method of Teaching Composition*, (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1968), p. 27.

9. Barbara E. Fassler Walvoord, *Helping Students Write Well: A Guide for Teachers in All Disciplines* (New York: MLA, 1982), p. 1.

10. Brent Bridgeman and Sybil B. Carlson, "Survey of Academic Writing Tasks, *Written Communication*, 1 (1984), 261.

11. Murray, p. 245.

12. Walvoord, p. 1.

13. George W. Nelson, "Proficiency Exam a Must." Editorial. *Arizona Daily Wildcat*, 1 October 1984, p. 7, cols. 3-4.

IN-SERVICE PACKAGE AVAILABLE FROM NEA

The National Education Association has recently come out with an In-Service training program, "Writing in the Content Areas." The complete package features books, filmstrips, leaflets, handouts, and audiotapes. Or the items can be ordered separately. Some of the books available are TEACHING WRITING IN THE CONTENT AREAS (elementary, middle school/junior high, and high school editions), QUESTIONING SKILLS, FOR TEACHERS, COMPOSITION: A MEDIA APPROACH, HOMEWORK AS A LEARNING EXPERIENCE, UNFINISHED STORIES FOR FACILITATING DECISION-MAKING, and NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION. For more information, write to NEA Professional Library, P.O. Box 509, West Haven, CT 06516

THE WRITING CENTER AS CENTER IN WRITING-ACROSS-THE-CURRICULUM

Diana George

Writing-across-the-curriculum is one of the fastest growing movements on university campuses today. It is a strong, intelligent program which acknowledges the value of writing much and often in all fields and at all levels of education. The program does not merely suggest that students must learn to write discipline-specific prose, though that may, of course, be one by-product of it. Further, it is not a program which intends to turn students into good proofreaders, though that, too, may occur. Instead, writing-across-the-curriculum is a program based on specific theories of learning and on specific theories of composition.

All of this should be good news for writing centers, for the general acceptance of writing-across-the-curriculum suggests that faculty in disciplines other than English or composition believe that writing is important, and that the teaching of it cannot be abandoned after the freshman year of college or after the student has fulfilled basic English requirements. The fact is, however, writing-across-the-curriculum leaders often ignore the valuable role the writing center can play in their program. It is up to us, as directors of writing centers, to remind them how closely our program is allied with theirs.

I might begin by simply outlining the basic premises of writing-across-the-curriculum as it stands at Michigan Technological University. These are premises that should already begin to make obvious how the writing center can fit into writing-across-the-curriculum:

1. Writing is a way of knowing, a way of learning.

2. Writing is a complex, developmental process.

3. The universe of discourse includes a broad range of writing functions and audiences.

You might first notice that none of these assumptions emphasizes what have come to be known as "the basics." There are good reasons for that, reasons which most of us in writing centers have already acknowledged. Writing-across-the-curriculum does not define good writing as good spelling and punctuation.

From the work of James Britton, James Moffett, Janet Emig, and others, we have learned that writing has a number of functions. The kind of writing students usually do for high school and college classrooms is what Britton calls transactional prose,

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writing that informs, writing that is outside the self. This is language that is directed at a reader or group of readers. Its function is to inform readers, not to inform the self. That is important, since writing-across-the-curriculum is based on the idea that we need to explore the way language can be used as a learning tool. For the writing center, that premise is important because it does not emphasize the purely mechanical. It recognizes the possibility that students might write prose for reasons other than to present an error-free draft to a teacher for evaluation.

Language that is used for learning is what Britton has called expressive writing, writing close to the self, writing meant to be read only by the writer. It is this kind of writing that is encouraged most in writing-across-the-curriculum programs.

Included in this premise are the following assumptions:

1. To get even a good piece of transactional prose, we all move through expressive stages. The focus in writing, therefore, should be on the process rather than on the final product. Most writing teachers have already turned to a process-orientation. For most faculty in other disciplines, this idea is a new one, one they are not always prepared to deal with.

2. Writing need not, indeed, should not, always be graded to be useful. Again, teachers of writing have accepted this idea for some years now, but faculty in other disciplines are often uncomfortable with it. They want to know how this writing will "count." They want to know how they might fit this kind of writing into their own classes.

Influenced by the work of Jean Piaget in particular, researchers like Moffett and Britton have emphasized the developmental nature of learning and attempted to fit writing strategies and writing problems into that developmental sequence which moves students from writing that is close to the self (i.e. personal narratives) through to writing that is analytical and interpretive. The attempt is to move toward strengthening critical thinking skills.

That is important for us to know because, especially on the college level, faculty have been evaluating these students as if they already had those skills. University faculty, in particular, are famous for forgetting their role as educators. They often think of themselves as scholars, as if scholarship excluded pedagogy. Traditionally, in the college classroom, these students take notes on lectures, then give professors back their own words. The professors are outraged when students have little of their own to say or when students are unwilling to risk going beyond classroom or library material to make their own generalizations. Still, they are unwilling to teach to that problem. In English classes, we primarily see this difficulty when we assign research papers. We get pastiches or plagiarism and often fail to see that our students are not cheating as much as they are using the only method they know of coming to grips with material that is new and perhaps difficult for them. Writing center tutors most often work with critical thinking skills, even when they are tutoring a student writing a personal narrative. The questions are always: "What do you want to say here?" "What did that event mean to you?" "What do you think it might mean to someone else?"

Both Britton and Moffett emphasize the fact that writing has a variety of functions and a variety of audiences (including the self) and that to take advantage of the developmental nature of writing, students must be exposed to all of these functions and audiences. Since research tells us that most student writing is transactional and that the audience is generally the teacher as evaluator, writing-across-the-curriculum leaders suggest that we help our students find other audiences and other functions for written language.

Writing-across-the-curriculum workshops

In many schools, as at Michigan Tech, the job of selling writing-across-the-curriculum goes on during a two- to four-day faculty workshop. During this time, faculty from disciplines all across campus gather to learn the basic precepts of the program.

> They examine problems that they identify in student writing.
>
> They are asked to write and share that writing with each other.
>
> They discuss ways they might use writing, in particular expressive writing, in their classes.
>
> They discuss methods of responding to prose in process, and are encouraged to think of writing as a process.

Throughout this period, the emphasis is on what they can do and how writing can be used in their classes as a learning tool.

Remarkably, these workshops have been very effective in selling the basic concepts of the program. Many of the faculty attending these workshops can see the value of using writing in their classes. Even those who come to the workshops feeling that the English department is trying to get the rest of the faculty to do its job are often persuaded that this is not the case.

The Writing Center is often mentioned as a place where faculty might send students who need extra help with their writing. However, even workshop leaders who encourage faculty to use the writing center give little or no advice on how that service might aid faculty and students from all disciplines.

In fact, if there is a consistent weakness in many writing-across-the-curriculum programs, it lies in the follow-up activities that should, but often do not, come after workshops. Furthermore, I would say that these follow-up activities can and should be coordinated through the writing center.

Putting writing-across-the-curriculum into practice

The problems come when these enthusiastic faculty return to their classes. Despite reassurances that they needn't be expert writers themselves in order to use writing in the classroom, faculty in other disciplines often find themselves facing a daily tension when they begin to assign writing. This tension, furthermore, moves two ways. The professor feels it when she tries to fit a writing component into a class that has never has such a component--a class for which she had never even considered such a component. The students feel the tension as an added burden in a course which, traditionally, has been based on lecturing, note-taking, then testing. Even much of the testing has generally required the very minimum of writing or composing skills. Students in these classes are often angered by the addition of a process journal or a short paper or any writing, graded or not, that they see as simply more busywork in an already too-busy schedule.

The role of the writing center

Typically, business increases in the writing center in the weeks immediately following a writing-across-the-curriculum workshop. Most of this business is of what I tend to call the "dumping ground" variety. A professor in physics may notice that a student has spelling problems. That student is sent to the writing center. A professor in engineering sees a student who cannot seem to punctuate. That student is sent to the writing center. Occasionally, a student is sent over to rewrite an essay, a report, or a quarter project. The student and tutor have little more than the vague instruction: "This essay is not acceptable in its present form."

These are, of course, not the kinds of comments that are emphasized in workshops. They actually go contrary to the kind of thinking that is encouraged. In fact, it does the basic philosophy of writing-across-the-curriculum little justice when the writing center simply acts as the university clean-up service.

Faculty seem to experience an odd reversal when they leave a writing-across-the-curriculum workshop and begin using writing in their own classes. In the workshops held at Michigan Tech, one of the first activities is a session in which faculty are asked to list what they see as the most serious student writing problems, in order of importance. We have again and again been delighted to find that these faculty most often identify clear thinking, content, and organization as the most serious problems students have in their writing. Mechanics rank very low on these lists.

However, when these same faculty return to their offices, assign writing, then refer students to the writing center, their referrals are primarily for what we call the basics. The comments tutors see on these papers tend to focus on mechanics. Even when it is fairly obvious that the paper at hand has serious problems at the composing stage, these faculty rarely seem to be able to identify these problems. The fact is that most of the students sent by these faculty do need work on those composition problems that workshops have identified as most serious; yet these faculty are still unable to identify those as problems that can be dealt with in the writing center.

The role of the writing center, then, must be to consult with faculty as well as with students across campus.

I would argue that if the writing-across-the-curriculum program is to have a permanent impact on any campus, that program must turn to the writing center, and the writing center must turn to its real strength--its tutoring program.

As directors of writing center programs, we have for years argued the value of our tutors. Tutors, we believe, are not proofreaders. They are teachers. They are facilitators. They are questioners. They are not patchwork artists. For longer than most of us care to think about, we have been arguing that our primary focus in the writing center is on process. Tutors have known for a long time that they could only try to find out how a writer goes wrong and teach to that. They could not just circle errors, then write an evaluation.

In fact, tutors have never had the protection of grades to fall back on. If they circled errors, then they had to teach to those errors. They had to try to discover why those errors were being made. They had to search for a way of getting students to correct themselves. In so doing, they have found that working with writing as a process has always been the only way that tutors could function in the writing center.

Working with students in many disciplines

Most writing centers already are set up to work with students from several disciplines:

1. They keep files of assignments and formats from several disciplines so that they might have models to use with these students.

2. They consult with faculty on assignments and student problem areas so that they might better understand the needs of particular classes and particular faculty members.

3. They may invite faculty in to talk with tutors, to explain assignments or discuss particular problems.

4. They may, like Tech, create special courses offered through the lab but designed and financed by other departments.

Furthermore, tutors are, in general, already suited to working with students within the basic philosophy of writing-across-the-curriculum. They have always acknowledged, for example, the value of talk. The entire tutor program is based on the role talk plays in composing. Tutors understand Britton's concept of "shaping at the point of utterance," or "How do I know what I want to say until I say it?"

They have always acknowledged the value of expressive writing, at least as a method of discovery. They do not look at a piece of prose in terms of what grade it might receive. They do look at a piece of prose and ask, "Who are you writing to?" "What do you want to say?" "What do you want your reader to know?" All of these qualities make writing center tutors uniquely prepared for working with students in all disciplines, at all levels, and with all types of prose.

Working with faculty

The real chore of the writing center in writing-across-the-curriculum lies in its work with faculty. I believe that the strange reversal we see in faculty evaluations of student writing is not a reversal at all. It is simply an unfamiliarity with means of evaluating prose. It is a lack of experience in handling composing as a process rather than merely grading the product.

Writing-across-the-curriculum workshops do not ignore this problem, but one workshop is certainly not enough to teach methods of responding to student writing. Most of us have been responding to student prose for years and still find ourselves struggling at times. It is not surprising that those faculty unused to responding to student writing except to grade the final product fall back on identifying those problems that they can clearly see, those problems that they can easily quantify.

To compound this problem, writing centers still fight the fix-it-shop mentality of many faculty on campus. They are still faced with administrators who believe that writing centers are only useful for "remediation," and that remedial labs may not be appropriate on certain campuses.

Therefore, the role of the writing center must be one of ongoing education within the sphere of writing-across-the-curriculum. Follow-up programs for workshop participants should be in the form of seminars directed by writing center staff and focused primarily on learning to respond to student writing at several draft stages. These seminars should continue the training begun at workshops and should reinforce the concepts of writing as learning, writing as a developmental process, and writing in the universe of discourse.

Such seminars can eliminate the lab-as-remediation-only tag that writing centers unjustly retain. They can aid faculty in assignment making and in writing center referral. They can make use of their most valuable asset--their tutoring program. They potentially can be the way to make writing-across-the-curriculum really work.

COHERENCE AND COMMITMENT: RESPONDING TO STUDENT WRITING IN THE DISCIPLINES

Virginia Nees-Hatlen

Teachers across-the-curriculum can structure classes faithful to their own disciplines and faithful to the slow and glorious development of writing abilities in many ways, but I believe two assumptions are fundamental to content-and-writing-rich courses. First, writing must be understood by teacher and students as a way of learning within a committed community of learners, not just as a way of reflecting something learned. Second, specific writing tasks or assignments must be seen by teacher and students as experiences in a unified and coherent process--from early discovery through successive drafts informed by responsive readers, toward eventual editorial responsibilities and presentation to a community of readers engaged by the questions we have pursued.

How does writing as a way of learning differ from writing-to-demonstrate-learning? Here, each of us will consult the methods and values of our disciplines for appropriate goals, but although our fields differ in many ways, we have some things in common. We share the need to re-imagine our discipline from the point-of-view of the student. We share the need to design sequences of experiences (activities, reading assignments, etc.) which will enable students to discover and understand how we and other committed adults think our way through problems and issues that constitute the work of our special communities, and how writing to each other advances our work.

Unfortunately, many writing assignments are modeled on adult expectation for committed and extended work, but are assigned on a single-shot basis ("Discuss the influence of John Locke on the writers of the U.S. Constitution"; "Compare and contrast Freud and Maslow's theories of personality"; "Write a critical analysis of the characterization in 'Young Goodman Brown'"). Such activities obscure the commitments of political science, psychology, and literary study. When we ask students to perform as if they had sufficient knowledge and confidence to address these questions, we tempt them to fall back upon notes from our lectures and certainties from their textbooks, when what we really want from them is to think through these "old" questions afresh, learning not only 'what happened' but also learning the kinds of questions our discipline regards as significant and why they remain significant.

Therefore, writing-as-a-way-of-learning should be assigned to stimulate and support activity and speculation that gets students "doing" science or literary interpretation or statistical analysis. Even though the written products may not look like adult models, such assignments lead students towards the disciplines that inform adult forms. Many teachers are now familiar

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with Nancy Martin et al's Writing and Learning Across the Curriculum 11-16 (Montclair, N.J.: Boynton/Cook, 1976), which illustrates how informal and "expressive" writing allows students to think on paper, to reason through problems, to practice moving from concrete and discrete observations to more powerful generalizations. Illustrative "expressive" papers that Martin et al include demonstrate thoughtfulness, insight, and discipline, which the students themselves have achieved. Such thinking-on-paper is encouraged by frequent writing in many modes and for many audiences--journals, lab notes, working-papers for small groups, letters, memos to the teacher, etc.

Many such writing tasks lend themselves to a focused response from the teacher as reader, particularly appropriate when the thinking or doing needs to be revised to be more accountable to the purposes and methods we value--and when the teacher has limited time for response. There's not much point in worrying over the placement of commas and colons in documenting bibliographical sources when a student hasn't learned to weigh sources for their validity, to be critical about assumptions and methods in printed materials, or to argue for a thesis within a context of previous work and writing. These latter are abilities which we desire as both content and writing teachers--indeed, they show how fruitless it is to separate "content," "understanding," and "expression."

But from past myths of form-content separation many people have learned to see the English teacher as he-(or she-) who-corrects grammar and punctuation. This stern and humorless paragon has haunted teachers of writing in non-English classes and may have kept some from assigning and working with their students' writing. If one doesn't feel confident in one's own usage (or in the arcane terminology of usage and "grammar"), and one assumes one has to be expert before responding to writing, one may refrain from assigning writing at all. But once freed from false distinctions between ideas and form and from the single-role model of response, teachers from all disciplines should be able to develop confidence when working with writing. After all, the teaching of writing is a natural extension of a teacher's profession of math, philosophy, science, health, or business. And the critically important components of writing within those disciplines are the zeal to "do" and think well and the commitment to share that thinking and doing with others who value the discipline and practice it--or with those who are clients of the profession. It is commonplace for publishing scholars and scientists to get special help in editorial revision, in "grammar," before submitting articles for publication, and it is not shameful that they do so. What would be shameful? To assert that such scholars (or younger scholars) "can't write."

Analogies to musical education and performance always seem useful to me as a way to highlight contradictions in the way we think about education in writing. So here's one: we do not expect first and second year piano students' performances to achieve "concert" quality, but neither do we expect children to stay with piano lessons beyond a couple of years if they never "make music" themselves. Learning to play the piano takes place while a child makes music on the piano and gets appropriate guidance and appreciation from a teacher. What the child does and learns is music, which is not exactly the same thing as technique, for music teaches the child what technique can be good for. Teachers who understand and care about the making of music need not be perfect technicians themselves to be good piano teachers.

Analogously, we can be confident that a science teacher who knows how to "do science" and share her science with others through writing, albeit imperfectly edited, may be able to teach imperfectly edited science-writing well. On the other hand, a science-teacher who rehashes others' science and never communicates to other scientists, but spells and punctuates without error, may only teach the scientific equivalent of endless scales, technically perfect but going nowhere; he is likely to teach students to avoid "science" in the future. And that is a shame, for those students may have aptitude for science, or at any rate, a capacity to appreciate the meaning of scientific work--its intrinsic excitement and its impact on their lives. They would have been failed more fundamentally than the students who will need to seek more assistance in editing their otherwise good science writing.

Unfortunately, we have often failed piano, science, and English students, by stressing technique over purpose or by stopping short of finished technique. And we have been failed at times in our careers as students, so that we have learned about all the things that we can't do (or don't want to do). And, to vary the old saw, what we think we can't do, we can't teach convincingly.

But let's forgive ourselves and our teachers. It's not too late to find solutions to limitations we inherit or transmit to new generations. People can re-study the piano at any age--if they come to love music. Once we face up to our alienated sense of our own intellectual abilities and start to address it, we will probably find it much easier to help students "make music." For English teachers, solutions to our uneasiness with "content" and the conventions of other disciplines may be found through collaboration with colleagues in our institutions, or through additional study of our own, formal or informal. Professional journals in other fields, for example, yield considerable information about the formats and purposes of writing in those disciplines.

For non-English teachers who have learned to think that they can't write and/or can't teach writing unless they "correct" every error, solutions may be found by 1) emphasizing one's expertise as a careful and committed reader or critic of writing in one's own field; 2) by collaborating with other writing teachers (English and non) on writing and teaching projects that feel like "music"; 3) by studying formally or informally the discipline of writing (for example, by seeking out university courses or workshops that are "writing intensive"); 4) by reading journal articles in composition and rhetoric, then talking to regular readers of them.

So that's the first assumption: writing must be understood by teachers and students as a way of learning--a way for teachers and students to keep learning more about what they can do.

The second assumption, which I'll explain briefly because it informs so many contributions to recent research on writing, is that writing is best learned when taught as experiences in a unified and coherent process. "Only connect," wrote E.M. Forster, and that hope/goal/value underlies the best scholarship about the writing process. If students see each writing task, each assignment, the writing in each different class they take, as coming from arbitrary whims of the teacher(s)--or as a way of testing their recall of specific and unconnected facts, then they will be unable to consolidate their learning or to control and critique their own writing. If they perceive or discover a coherent explanation of what they do in a course, then they can control their choices more appropriately.

Therefore, the alternate roles for the writing teacher I discuss below will only work when the student understands that each role parallels his roles as writer, as he works through the successive drafts of a task toward increased meaning, more effective structure, greater accountability to the conventions of academic communities, and more acceptable appearance. A coherent education can emerge only if the student learns from all her teachers all the connections--the ultimate unity of writing and learning, the interpenetration of form and content, the integrity of a single human voice which commits itself to paper when it has something worth writing about.

Research studies suggest that mere frequency of writing isn't enough to develop writing abilities [see Elizabeth Haynes, "Using Research in Preparing to Teach Writing," English Journal, 66 (Jan. 1978, 82-88)]. that is to say, writing-for-writing's-sake alone won't improve writing, which requires a two-way communication between writer and audience, writer and world. But the primary audience for most writers in school remains the teacher. And although it's incumbent on us to get peers and people beyond the classroom involved as readers for our students, still the teacher's responses will remain important. After all, if grades aren't the Final Word, we know they are weighty sentences to many students. Therefore, it seems desirable to improve our responses to student writing--to maximize the likelihood of more coming back from the student (in subsequent papers, in questions about our responses, in enhanced understanding of the meaning of literacy and the processes of reading and writing).

Traditionally, American teachers have communicated to students about their writing through the medium of written comments on student work. In what follows, I'd like to review some optional roles which teachers can elect to enact when writing to students about their writing. These alternative modes of response, when joined in a coherent writing course, supply the feedback writers need to learn about themselves as writers, and they initiate the student into our communities of adult discourse. These four roles for the teacher--Reader, Rhetorical Critic, Editor, and Grader--are frequently confused in practice, and this, in turn, confuses the people involved, students and writing teacher. It seems useful, therefore, to isolate these roles, to identify their relationship to phases in the writing process, and to argue for their value at different times in the "teaching process." A short description of each role follows, with a brief discussion of its benefits and appropriateness.

Reader

A reader reacts as an interested layperson who can't read the writer's mind. Her role is not to judge or correct the piece, but to show how she makes meaning out of the writing by describing what is happening as she reads. We all respond, spontaneously, to student writing as readers, but we do not always let writers hear or read about these reactions. Thus we may hide our sovereign responses--our confusion, our delight, our ambivalence--and lose an excellent way to get information to the writer about what worked or didn't work.

In the role of reader, a writing teacher writes comments in the margins such as: "This surprised me, to see the old cliches handled so well," or "I'm confused here. Is it the dog or the dog's owner you're talking about now?" or "This reminds me of a story I read recently--you are interested in this same issue of parent-child conflict as ___________." And/or a reader writes a letter to the writer about the reading experience--or perhaps does this in an end-note.

A reader does not "correct"; that's for another role. After all, we usually don't stop and "correct" errors in the daily newspaper, though they are certainly there. It's not our role, not our responsibility. But journalists could follow our spontaneous reactions for clues to editorial crimes, as students can profitably learn to trace a reader's confusion to its source in a misplaced comma.

Advantages to students from responsive readers can be that readers affirm the value and interest of the writer's content--"Somebody listened"; that they help young writers learn to anticipate how other readers will make meaning or lose meaning; that they encourage writers to expand, clarify, and order their thoughts in a relatively non-threatening way. Responsive readers help writers learn what they want to say to readers who are better imagined and thus better served.

When should teachers take the reader role? This role is appropriate for early drafts, for journals and focused free-writings, for poems and stories (more supportive and useful than general evaluations like "very imaginative"), and for revised papers, too, especially when information about what the paper does to the reader is crucial to the student's understanding of the effects of revision. Thus, the teacher as reader takes the role of future audiences and helps students anticipate their needs for information, context, and orderliness.

Rhetorical Critic

Sorry about the clumsiness of the term, but "critic" alone can imply a judge or someone who savages tender buds, and "rhetorician" alone is too arcane. ("Rhetor" is the classic term for a public speaker--one who attempts to persuade an audience. "Rhetorician" refers to the people who study, teach, and evaluate the arts of rhetors.) A rhetorical critic focuses on the purposes and strategies of writing and attempts to describe how the "means" advance or interfere with the "ends." His purpose is to help a speaker or writer be more aware of the effects of his choices in the rhetorical situation he's addressing, which includes the audience, the writer's goals, formal expectations, language choices, social context, other points-of-view, and expectations people have for logical or fair argument. It is especially important that teachers more familiar with authentic rhetorical situations than their young students make clear how the demands of school writing parallel the demands of rhetorical situations in the world, in specialized communities of discourse, as well as in the general community of literate people.

A rhetorical critic looks at details in terms of larger aims and structures. When she comments in the margins she tries to shed light on what the paper _is doing_ and on choices the writer might elect to help the paper _do more_ (e.g. "This analogy focuses readers on your thesis about sociobiology and Gould in a striking way--can you extend the analogy into the next paragraph as a way to supply a strong organic transition?").

When he writes end-notes or separate-sheet comments or letters to the student, or comments to a class on duplicated papers, the rhetorical critic sees his job as identifying choices the writer has made and the implications of those choices. He tries to describe his sense of the paper's present purpose, major structures and strategies and to present his analysis of ends and means. A characteristic comment might be: "Your story seems to want to create suspense, but in several places your narrator Mike gives us information about the future. Can you do without these and maximize the reader's tension?" Another: "In this catalog entry for the painting, you spend more time discussing the artist's biography than in referring to elements in the painting itself. Since your purpose was to provide a frame or frames of reference that will extend and enrich a viewer's looking, your emphasis now may be less visual than you'd like."

A rhetorical critic does not "correct," but she does have the responsibility to challenge, guide, suggest, and question. Neither does a rhetorical critic give a total global response to everything--she _focuses_ on what seem to be major priorities, central things. After all, critics of literature (or students in the role of critic) don't _change_ the text they're talking about to make it better. And they don't talk about everything they could, either. It's not their role.

Advantages to students from responsive "rhetorical critics" can be: that rhetorical critics affirm the responsibility of the writer for shaping her writing--"Somebody thinks I can do this well"; that they help young writers learn to step back from their intentions to examine effects of their actual choices--structure, audience, tone, attitude, logical flow, etc.; that they challenge writers to search for better ways to order and express their sense of the world.

When should teachers take the role of rhetorical critic? This role is appropriate at all stages of the writing process when we focus on goals and tactics, especially when the writer is ready to tackle "organization." But it is important to _focus_ on *major* issues at each stage, not scatter lots of discrete bits of good advice (even if it's also discreet!).

Who else can take this role? Fellow students can give useful information here, especially if guided to stick to information and avoid judgment. Statements like "Good organization" or "Well-written" are not helpful, whether they come from teachers or peers (the writer doesn't know why you think it's good or bad), but peers often think that's what they are "supposed to do" when asked to be each others' critics. It will help students be better readers and critics for teachers to illustrate more flexibility and specificity when they write on student papers.

If students write to varied audiences, with a variety of expressive, explanatory, or persuasive purposes, they come to see the relationships between aim, audience, structure, and information better. Then when a teacher takes up the role of rhetorical critic, he can respond to their work in terms of a task *they* understand as fully rhetorical.

Editor

An editor changes, corrects, queries and generally advises a writer about "fixing up" or polishing a text ready for publication. English teachers often take this role too early in the writing process to do any good, or mix editing with reader reactions or rhetorical criticism in such a way that the writer gets mixed signals. Imagine, for example, an introductory paragraph all marked up for spelling words, faulty idioms, comma faults, etc., with a marginal note that says "You need to tie these general statements to specific details." If the major structural change is made, most of the text will be transformed, leaving few of the edited details for the next draft. In such a case, aren't the editorial corrections gratuitous, a waste of teacher time?

Conventionally, college and high school teachers often use abbreviations for editorial corrections:*AWK*, *D*, //, , *agr*, *frag*, *mm*., which textbook publishers cheerfully supply in rhetorical handbooks. Such cryptic signs assume great zeal in the students to achieve the purpose; students who don't immediately recognize the mark need to go look it up, then figure out how it applies to what they've written, then make the required changes. How many students actually do so? It's worth a bit of classroom empirical research to check on this. Many correction marks only work if the student already *knows* the appropriate rule and has been careless in applying it consistently. If a student does *not* understand the principle--of subject-verb agreement, for example--a teacher's mark will not tell her how to learn it, merely that she has not learned it.

I recently asked my students in Teaching Secondary Composition to interview junior high, high school and college students about their views on writing and their sense of their strengths and weaknesses as writers. The information coming from many of these interviews is disturbing to these future English teachers: many students they interviewed equate writing well with the avoidance of errors, period. A corollary discovery: many students report anger and bewilderment about teacher comments on their papers. Many see *all* teacher's comments as criticism; they seem to assume that a really good paper will have no marks on it, (though paradoxically, some report feeling disappointed to get a paper back with just an "A" or an "Excellent" on it--all that work, and no response to what they've said!).

All of the above suggests we should be cautious about performing as editors. But, the editor role is important, as we all know. There are conventional standards for Edited American English, and at some point our students will be responsible to them and to their readers. So how can we overcome the difficulties and make our skills serve the students? The following outline incorporates some advice about techniques that serve the editor-role well:

1. Individualize instruction whenever possible.

2. A quick conference is more effective than anything else for explaining grammatical intricacies--you can see from face and "body language" if the student gets it.

3. Focus editorial help on one thing at a time--help students learn to recognize patterns of error they frequently commit, then help them learn the rules that govern these patterns.

4. Whenever you use editorial marks, do ask students to make the suggested changes, and do look at their revisions.

5. Teach proof-reading strategies, such as:

   a. reading out loud to a friend (to catch goofs and missing words);

   b. having a friend read a paper out loud (helps to catch punctuation problems);

   c. reading backwards for spelling errors;

   d. looking for patterned errors the student often commits;

   e. keeping spelling lists on words misspelled, in three columns, one for their spelling, one for the correct spelling, one to label the type of error (dbl. consonants, vowel combination ie or ei, etc.). Then the teacher can work with the student to find rule-governed errors and learn the appropriate rules.

6. Develop check-sheets for each student, keyed to his needs and problems, to help you remember the patterns you're focusing on, one at a time.

7. Concentrate editorial attention on next-to final drafts only.

Grader

Most of us feel pressure to justify the grade we give in comments on papers. And sometimes, this leads us to enumerate faults and feel defensive about grading. This can be avoided much of the time. Whenever possible, we should help students understand general standards for evaluation in advance--this can clarify our expectations for student work and clear the air when it comes to grading individual papers, so we can praise C papers as well as A papers. Some teachers use a checksheet, some grade only in conference, some use numbers, some letter grades, some check-systems. Whatever the system, students need to understand how their papers fit into it.

Whenever possible, we should use grades to help teach the writing process, by grading papers which students select as their best and have revised and edited thoroughly to meet their standards. Some teachers ask students to choose one paper every so many days or weeks for a grade, others will review all papers written and revised over a period of time in an evaluation conference, others call for portfolios of work to be graded periodically, or at the end of a term.

Such procedures help students become aware of their strengths and weaknesses and their achievements over time better than lots of frequent grades, which sometimes strike students as random or arbitrary. We know they aren't, but if students knew what we know, they wouldn't need us.

And they do need us, not primarily as guardians at the door of true literacy, nor as the experts who will "English their papers" for them, but as adult members of the communities of writers which they hope to enter (even if, initially, they don't see Science or Business or Nursing as, among other things, a writing community). Teachers in all disciplines have the responsibility to acknowledge that need, to nurture and welcome new members by inspiring them with commitment to the purposes and values of the community, as well as by sharing skills and knowledge of conventions.

INFORMATION AND VISUAL PROPERTIES: A MATRIX REPRESENTATION

Gene Washington

Every teacher of freshman-level writing has a procedure, I suspect, for showing students how to "extract" information from visual objects--information intended to find a place in the written text. Such a procedure might include a list of questions like "How big is the object?" "Does its size remind you of anything?" "What are its color and shape?" "Do they have any correlation with its function?" and these might be illustrated by photographs, movies, or common classroom objects. The procedure might even include a way of identifying visual properties anomalous, or unexpected, for the object in question--an object like outsized Gulliver in Lilliput. Where the purpose of the text is concerned, the anomalous property might be as important as the normal, or expected, property.

A procedure I have been using in my freshman-level courses lately is one I call the "matrix-representation" of visual properties. Its purpose is to provide students with a systematic way of correlating visual properties of an object with its possible human "concerns," ones like the function of the object, its cost, or its aesthetic qualities. Such correlations, expressed as questions, generate information about the object not available whenever the visual properties or concerns are considered in isolation from each other. Correlating a property with a concern produces an effect much like that of synergistic drugs--whatever they can do singly, they can do much better in combination with each other. Questions produced by such correlations, I should add, include not only those about normal, or expected, properties, but also the previously mentioned anomalous ones. (I return to this topic in more detail below.)

Here, by illustration, is a matrix I constructed for recent classes. The matrix was composed of seven visual properties and 11 concerns. Each property and concern was given a number that uniquely identified its position on a horizontal (x) and a vertical (y) axis. These axes form the outer "boundaries" of the matrix.

The properties, and their identifying number, were as follows:

x1: Size. Is X large, or small?

x2: Shape. Is X round, oblong, or square?

x3: Extent. Is X thick or thin? Deep or shallow?

x4: Spatial Orientation. Does X have a front, a top, a bottom? How are its parts, if any, arranged relative to each other?

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x5: Penetrability. Is X transparent, or opaque? Is X hard, or soft?

x6: Color. Is X blue, white, or colorless?

x7: Material/substance. Is X made out of wood, steel, bone, etc.?

The concerns humans may have with X, together with their identifying number, were the following:

y1: Intentionality. This very general term includes terms like "function," "purpose," "motive," and the like. Thus we may ask "what is the function of this mechanism?" or "what is the rhetorical intention of this text?" The term we select depends, that is, on the nature of X, whether or not it is a person, an artifact, or an animal.

y2: Structure/form. Questions about this concern usually have to do with the parts of X and how they fit together. But we may also ask if the structure is a "normal" one, a familiar one, and the like.

y3: Evolution/history. Does X have a history? Did it have a predecessor, and will it have, in all likelihood, a successor?

y4: Lifespan/durability. If X is a living being, how long can we expect it to live? If an artifact, a tool, etc., how durable is it?

y5: Quanta. How numerous is X? If it has parts, how many does it have? Have its numbers increased, or decreased, over time?

y6: Aesthetics. Is X beautiful? Elegant?

y7: Context. Where is X? Where should it be? Under this we include problems with storage (or packaging); with the way X fits, or does not fit, into its place.

y8: Repair/maintenance. Is X something that needs to be repaired, to be managed, or cared for.

y9: Rank/dominance/priority. Is X a member of a hierarchy? Is understanding of X only possible by considering its rank, status, and the like?

y10: Social consequences. Does X have, in general, a good or bad effect on society? Can you describe what it is? Under concern we put any "problems" that may arise with X, with its use, its context, and the like. Common problems with an automobile include, for example, cost of maintenance and taxes.

y11: Individual and collective. Does X reflect an individual concern, or a collective (societal) one? Or both? Objects privately owned, automobiles, houses, clothes, will always exemplify some individual's concern. But they may also be the cause of a public one, especially if their use violates a law or behavioral norm of the community. Another term for this concern is private/public.

We next went on to combine the x and y-axes (which form the outer boundaries of the matrix) and to illustrate its general use with one correlation. The correlation, one between the size of x and its intention (function or purpose), was represented by arrows and a star (*). Questions to the right of it show the kind of information made possible by the correlation:

x x1 x2 x3 x4 x5 x6 x7 x

y ↓

y1 ⟶ * How does the purpose of X correlate with its size? Is the female of the mammalian species generally smaller because of her role in reproduction?

y2

y3

y4

y5

y6

y7

y8

y9

y10

y11
(If we wish we can represent this correlation as x1*y1.)

Further correlations, I pointed out to students, would increase the amount of information. Thus ones between x1 (size) and y5 (quanta) and y9 (dominance) would generate the following kinds of additional information:

x1*y5: Is the female smaller than the male in all mammalian species? If not, then what is the ratio of difference? 30%, 50%, etc.?

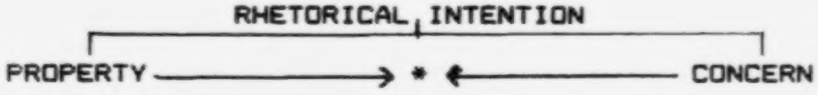
x1*y9: Does the relative size of the sexes relate to the question of dominance (or rank) of one sex over another?

At this point I also asked students to ignore correlations that produce trivial, or meaningless, information about the subject. An example, with the subject at hand, is that between x5 (penetrability) and y9 (aesthetics).

CLASSROOM OBJECTS

The next step was to apply the matrix to a common classroom object, in this case the blackboard. This produced the following sorts of correlations and their questions:
1. Does the color (x6) of the board have more to do with its function (y1) or with its aesthetic quality (y6). If you were asked to compare it with some other pedagogical tool, would color or function be your probable basis for comparison?
2. Suppose your job is to try to sell the blackboard, or one like it, to your reader. What properties and concerns would you focus on in your text? Its hardness (x5) and durability (y4)? Its material (x7) and maintenance (y8)? Would the aesthetics of the board (y6) be a factor?
3. Suppose your purpose in your text is simply to describe the blackboard to someone who had never seen one (somebody, say, from a country with a different pedagogical system from our own). Would some visual properties, say x1 and x2, be more important in your description than some others, say x5 or x6? If so, why? Are size and shape more visual than the others? Which human concerns would you correlate with the properties?

The main point to these questions was to lead the students to put correlations in the context of the specific rhetorical intention of the text. The intention, to sell the blackboard, to describe it, to compare it with some other pedagogical tool, etc., largely determines what correlations the writer does, or does not, make. To emphasize the control rhetorical intention should have over a correlation, I drew the following diagram on the board:



ANOMALIES AND PROBLEMS

The matrix, as I mentioned earlier, is designed to identify anomalous properties and to correlate them with human concerns; to try to understand, by my earlier example, why Gulliver in Lilliput is twelve times as large as its inhabitants and twelve times smaller later in Brobdingnag. Correlations of this kind generate the following kinds of questions: Is the size of X inconsistent with its function? Will its shape cause a problem with storing it for the winter? Does its color run contrary to its purpose? (Does the color of this hunting jacket expose the wearer to danger?) Such questions have, in general, the purpose of identifying "misfits" between a given property and concern, a misfit that may cause a specific human problem--one that may, nevertheless, become the subject of the text.

The matrix discussed in this paper is, at least to some degree, an arbitrary one. That is, individual teachers might want to replace some of the properties and concerns with ones of their own choosing; or they might want to expand the number of properties and concerns. They might, for example, want to add to the list of properties, "motion," or to the concerns "consistency," or "expectation." Conditions governing such changes include (i) the nature of the writing course (Is it a technical writing course? One in expository writing?), (ii) the quality of the students (Can they, in general, work on their own? Are they industrious?), and (iii) the nature of the writing assignment (Is the assigned subject a concrete one, like "describe this classroom," or is it more abstract, like "describe the registration-procedures for enrolling in this university as a freshman"). Students, working in small groups, can also be very useful to each other in sorting out these matters.

BEYOND PRIMERS: A THOROUGH GUIDE TO THE STATE
OF THE ART OF TEACHING WRITING BY COMPUTER

As advances in computers alter the shape of education, teachers and professors of English are under pressure to learn about the new technology and become proficient in using it. The Computer in Composition Instruction, just published by the National Council of Teachers of English, brings together a wealth of information on the current state of the art of teaching composition with computers.

Edited by William Wresch, teacher of English and computer science at the University of Wisconsin Center, Marinette, the book features essays by pioneers in the six-year-old art of teaching the writing process using word processors and microcomputer programs for coaching. The contributors examine in detail 13 major projects for computer teaching, telling how they were developed, how they operate, and how each program is integrated with traditional instruction. A few of the projects discussed are Writer's Workbench, HOMER, COMP-LAB, Wordsworth II, and SEEN. Previously, such information has been available only from scattered sources—conference papers and journals.

The writers demonstrate how the best of the new technology works: to individualize instruction, to give specific help at the moment when it is most needed, to offer instant feedback and analysis of the student's efforts, and to free the student from the "mindless copying" that interferes with revision. Editor Wresch notes the view among researchers that computers help students see words on a page the way professional writers do—as "fluid," rather than as cast in concrete, thus freeing them to write and rewrite.

The Computer in Composition Instruction includes an annotated bibliography, further source lists, and a glossary of computer terminology.

(The Computer in Composition Instruction, edited by William Wresch. 221 pages, paperbound. Price: $14.25; NCTE members, $11.00. ISBN: 0-8141-0815-6. LC: 84-16620. Available from NCTE, Urbana, Illinois. Stock No. 08156.)

THE LIBRARY RESEARCH PAPER: FOR THE TERM, DURING THE TERM, AND THROUGHOUT THE TERM

Samuel J. Rogal

H. G. Wells opens the third chapter of his _Experiment in Autobiography_ (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1934) by recalling that "Bromley Academy was a school in the ancient tradition, but the culmination of my schooling was to occur in the most modern and advanced of colleges then in existence, the science schools at South Kensington. It was a queer discontinuous series of educational processes through which my brain was passed, very characteristic of the continual dislocations of that time" (p. 59). He concludes that same chapter by observing, again relative to his early schooling between 1874 and 1880, that "before one breaks or climbs fences one must look over them or through them for a time, and just then I was merely in the stage of peeping with a wild surmise and daring nothing more" (p. 112). English teachers, especially, do not have to stretch their imaginations terribly far to view, almost a century after young Herbert Wells' experience, the state of post-secondary education in late twentieth-century America. They see before them a "queer discontinuous series of educational processes" by which both students and their instructors rush forward eagerly to break down or climb over fences in an effort to confront and then complete traditional requirements.

One such traditional requirement is the library research paper. It has become, either through departmental initiative, administrative fiat, or distorted sense of educational mission, a fixture within college level writing programs. No doubt the issue of its validity and practicality, as well as the matter of its benefits to students, will continue to claim the attention of theorists and practitioners. However, no matter how research writing and library projects managed to affix themselves to various curricula, they remain essential to any writing program--as necessary as formal instruction in language, rhetoric, and literature. The discussions seem not so much focused upon the why, when, or where of the library research paper--or _term paper_, for those who cling to old labels--but upon how such a unit can function effectively within any one or all of a number of composition courses. _Effective_, in this context, refers not so much to the paper-reading load or class size of the instructional staff, but to the intellectual growth of the students after they have participated in the exercise. The latter quality has suffered considerably--or has failed to emerge altogether--because the library research paper continues to grind along on the rusty treadmills of lists, forms, formats, cards, and deadlines. It continues to be a project performed in semi-darkness, without much sharing of ideas or exchange of problems, methods, and conclusions. It continues to exist as a large but nonetheless

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limited unit because students receive piles of instructions but little or no guidance.

To help bring the library research project into the warmth of intellectual stimulation and the light of education practicality, at least two variations upon the present general conditions seem worthy of some consideration. Both can be easily implemented within either the freshman level writing course or its sister programs in advanced composition and writing about literature. The first method requires that the students select a research problem at the outset of the term and submit various stages in the development of the research paper--introduction, background, body, conclusion, and finished product--at different times during the course of the semester. As a second method or variation, the students again select the problems for research at the beginning of the term and then submit, at various times throughout the semester, completed essays focusing upon a predetermined number of related sub-topics. The complete research paper, then, comes directly from the sub-topic essays. Although such alternatives emphasize different methods for producing the library research paper, they achieve essentially the same results. And, of more than passing concern, both continue to allow for writing projects totally apart from the library research problem.

In the "various stages of development" method, the student selects, the instructor assigns, or the student and instructor consult upon a valid research problem within the first five or six class meetings. During the next two to three weeks, the student compiles a tentative bibliography and prepares a preliminary outline (to include thesis statement or general abstract for the entire research problem). Thus, the pre-writing stage for the research project occupies practically the initial month of the term. The specific but limited writing assignments that follow comprise the separate sections of the research paper, as well as some combinations of those sections:

1. The introduction, being two paragraphs in which the student-writer introduces the research problem, establishes the thesis and major assertions, forms a point of view, and determines audience and degree of reader involvement.

2. The background section, consisting of one or two paragraphs that include such matters as historical information, biography, definitions of key terms, and necessary explanations of special or technical concepts.

For the third assignment, the student revises both the introductory and background sections--or, perhaps, chooses to combine the two into a single introductory section--and submits that in company with approximately one-half of the body of the paper, while the fourth assignment requires what one may label the tentatively complete body--in bio-rhetorical terms, a revised upper half and a new torso. The next, or fifth assignment, calls for two paragraphs of conclusion. Naturally, each of the five preliminary writing assignments contains formal endnotes or footnotes and a selected bibliography for the material covered by that portion of the research paper.

The research essay itself becomes the final assignment for this project, the concluding stage to a series of clearly related phases. Its advantages appear more than obvious, especially in light of students being able to work toward an end, rather than merely delaying until the last possible moment the completion of something that has to be "turned in." The instructor reads, evaluates, and returns each stage or portion; the student-writer reacts, confers, revises, and rewrites. During the period between the return of the fifth preliminary assignment and the submission of the completed project, the student again revises and rewrites, editing the first five assignments and forming them into a single, unified research essay. Thought, thoroughness, and careful inquiry become the means by which the student achieves a high rate of intellectual profit for himself. And, of course, the instructor will have established familiarity with the project, rather than being introduced to and confronted with a term paper submitted ten days or two weeks before the end of the term. Further, that same instructor will have the advantage of being able to evaluate the student-writer's preparation and the extent to which the writer has learned to profit from mature advice and positive guidance.

A related activity, carried out upon two or three occasions during the term, may well help to promote interest and critical awareness among all members of the class, as well as disseminate information about various topics and different methods and materials of research. Specifically, each student prepares a 200-word abstract of a particular part of the research paper, of the entire research project, or of the state of the project to date. The abstract or report may be duplicated and distributed to members of the class, or it may be delivered orally, thus causing the class to listen attentively and to take notes. At any rate, for each presentation, the classroom audience completes an abstract evaluation questionnaire comprised of such items as--

1. Is there a valid issue or problem here, or is the writer merely presenting a rehash of what already seems to exist?

2. Is the research problem of value to someone specializing in or seriously concerned with the general area?

3. Is the research problem of value to the non-specialist?

4. Does the research problem allow for reader involvement?

5. Does the abstract, proposal, or report indicate the writer's specific research methods?

6. Does the abstract, proposal, or report appear to have a clear, distinct focus?

7. Does the order of parts appear logical?

8. Does the writer appear to be interested in or enthusiastic about the topic or problem?

9. Is there evidence of the writer's style showing signs or indications of rising above that of the objective and impersonal reporter of information?

10. Did you understand the writer's proposal, abstract or report?

Of course, those and other questions will constitute the substance of the research unit within the composition program, so the critical criteria will not be foreign to members of the class as they respond to the various abstracts and reports. Further, such an activity will serve to train undergraduates as listeners to and critics of their colleagues' projects, which, in turn, encourages student-writers to develop a sense of audience for their research projects. Nevertheless, no matter the extent of peer criticism and evaluation, the instructor continues to serve, throughout the duration of the library research project, as the principal guide to and evaluator of the various skills necessary for competent research techniques and research writing.

One possible problem area in such a method of teaching the library research essay focuses upon maintaining student interest. Simply, the project selected in late August or early September, researched, written, submitted, revised, edited, re-written, re-submitted, and finally completed by early to mid-December may lead to a sense of boredom within the minds of certain underclassmen. Therefore, the instructor must, in planning the course, provide sufficient space and time for additional, non-research-related writing assignments that will supply the needed variety. Another concern may center upon the final or completed version of the research essay. Will students, because they have written, revised, and re-written their research projects according to the instructor's comments, suggestions, and guidelines, expect too high an evaluation of the final essay? In other words, "I've done everything he told me to do, so how can I get anything less than an `A'?" Undoubtedly, since part of the final evaluation relates directly to the student's ability to rewrite, revise, and edit, those very processes, and the evidence thereof, contribute as much to the final grade as does the actual style, organization, content, and form of the paper itself. In the end, why should not a student-writer earn high marks for editing? Do not we preach, almost daily, the merits of revision and self-evaluation as strong contributors to success in written communication? If so, then we must be prepared to reward students for their competence and achievements in these areas.

The second suggested method for carrying out the full term library research project reveals two distinct differences (they may even be considered advantages) from the first concept. Essentially, this method solves, to a certain extent, the problems of variety and student interest, while it also places a heavier burden upon the student-writer in terms of the completed or final version of the library research paper. Again, the choice of a problem for research comes about early in the term to allow time, before submission of the initial writing assignment, for the formation of a workable thesis statement, a tentative outline, and a preliminary list of primary and secondary sources. The five or six writing assignments that follow the planning period and precede the final research project will be complete essays on various aspects or sub-divisions of the major topic.

Let us say, for example, that an enterprising and inquiring student determines to investigate Samuel Johnson's attitudes toward language as revealed in such primary sources as the _Plan of a Dictionary of the English Language_ (1747), the prefatory essays within the 1755 _Dictionary_, and the actual _Dictionary_. The outline of and sources for such a problem may well reveal a number of sub-topics related and even necessary to the major area of discussion, such as--

1. English lexicography before Johnson.
2. Johnson's lexicographical methods and materials.
3. Major sources of Johnson's definitions: the so-called "wells of English undefiled."
4. Johnson's amanuenses.
5. The _Plan_ of 1747.
6. "Preface" to the _Dictionary_ of 1755.
7. Contemporary reactions, positive and negative, to the _Dictionary_ of 1755.
8. Johnson's place in and contributions to the history and development of the English language.
9. Dominant attitudes toward language in England between 1660 and 1750.
10. The state of orthography in England during the early and mid-eighteenth century.

Most assuredly, not all topics for undergraduate library research papers need be so specialized, historical, or even scholarly; the point to be made, however, is that practically all student research problems--from automobile racing and ballooning to television soap operas and variations of violin instruction--will produce unlimited quantities of subjects for shorter essays. And, understandably, guidance from and assistance of the instructor will help all students to see important relationships of the smaller parts to the larger project.

At any rate, once the student and the instructor have reached an agreement on the five or six specific sub-topics to be developed prior to the final project, the former, during the major portion of the term, works on and submits (at regular and reasonable intervals) a like number of short research essays--each on a specific sub-topic and each with selected bibliography and reference notes. Once the last of those has been evaluated and returned, the student-writer then prepares the final research project for submission. The material and sources come directly from the five or six shorter essays; the student must determine what details to retain and what to discard, what portion will constitute the body of the major project and what will comprise introduction and conclusion. Unlike the first method described herein--the development by stages wherein the student essentially refines previously completed and evaluated _parts_ and fits them into the already determined organizational frame--this second method requires wholesale revision, editing, re-writing, and arrangement. However, _like_ the first method, the second one also allows the student to develop familiarity with the research problem and to gain experience in forming and expanding it into a clearly written, informative, and meaningful research project. Finally, the reliance upon a series of sub-topic essays prior to the complete research paper also provides opportunities for sharing of information and research procedures among student-writers through presentations of abstracts, proposals, and peer criticism and evaluation, while it further permits assignment and completion of other types of writing projects during the term.

Surely, we in the educational profession must discipline ourselves and our students to stand at the fences, to "look over them or through them for a time" prior to hurling ourselves headlong toward the completion of some end or before paying sufficient attention to essential preliminaries. The library research paper may not constitute an end-all for education or even serve as the ultimate activity within the college level writing program, but it certainly does provide students with ample time and the proper environment in which to commit themselves totally to the completion of a meaningful academic and intellectual endeavor. Therefore, as teachers of writing, we must take advantage of each and every opportunity to teach, as complements to the methods and the materials of library research, the disciplines and the skills associated with patience, thoroughness, and care. We must, if we do nothing else for our students, sweep aside the attitude that promotes hastily assembled mediocrity and replace it with the motivation that produces the clear vision of systematic competence.

TEACHING RESEARCH SKILLS: TWO NEW RESEARCH TEXTS

Regina Rinderer

One of the most neglected areas of innovation in composition texts has been that of the research text. While rhetorics and readers have begun to use our increasing knowledge of the composing process, texts focusing on the research paper have, for the most part, remained rather staid and uninviting. Until, that is, the appearance of two new texts which teach the actual skills of doing research and incorporate new approaches to reading: Charles Bazerman's The Informed Writer and Laurence Behrens and Leonard J. Rosen's Writing and Reading Across the Curriculum.

The Informed Writer was touted by the Houghton Mifflin sales representative at our university as THE book which would solve our research course problems. (Our department offers that strange animal: a separate course on the research paper.) Though in the end Bazerman came in as our alternate choice, it is an innovative book which offers material on doing research papers that is not readily available in other texts.

Bazerman introduces his text with an intriguing section on "The Written Conversation." Using the analogy of a spoken conversation, he presents the writing of a research paper as a means of "enter[ing] into the informed conversation of any field or area of interest--whether personal, business, professional, or academic." This approach is consistent with that offered by Richard L. Larson and by Robert A. Schwegler and Linda K. Shamoon in the December 1982 College English. Such an approach seems to me a helpful way of envisioning the research paper for students and professionals alike.

The Informed Writer contains three sections: "Read Well to Write Well," "Using Sources Creatively," and "The Craft of Writing." In these three sections, Bazerman focuses on four areas: precise reading techniques, comparing and critically evaluating ideas, using source materials effectively, and developing and supporting viewpoints. Though these may not sound terribly original, his approach to them is fresh. Section I, "Read Well to Write Well," for example, uses psychological insights in its presentation of reading strategies. Sub-sections such as "Hear What's Said; Read What's Written," "Overcoming Resistance," "Misassumptions," and "Right Word, Wrong Meaning" discuss with lucidity various reasons why readers misunderstand texts.

In this section and throughout, the author discusses what for me are usually dull aspects of reading and research presentations in inviting ways. When he introduces summarizing, a case in point, he uses a journey motif, comparing the task of restating a writer's thought to re-tracing the steps of a journey in order to recapture the entire experience. He tells us that the attention necessary for paraphrasing well will lead us "across the contours

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of another writer's thought." In Chapter 3, Bazerman teaches the researcher the importance of, and various methods for, reacting to reading. Bazerman encourages the reader to take an active role and shows various ways to annotate and respond to researched materials.

Bazerman's text teaches the student various key research skills, an area virtually untouched by most other texts which purport to teach researched writing. Section I focuses on paraphrasing, summarizing, reacting to reading, analyzing purpose and technique, and evaluating. "Using Sources Creatively," Section II, discusses the key research skills of comparing two sources and especially the little-taught one of synthesizing information from multiple sources. The author explains synthesis, offers valuable hints, and provides two essays for practice. Chapter 7, the comparing and synthesizing chapter, is excellent.

Shifting gears away from the research process in Section III, "The Craft of Writing," The Informed Writer offers sensible advice about the writing process to writers of research papers. Perusing the table of contents suggests the wisdom of the advice: "Writing Takes Time," "Defining Your Relationship to Your Audience," and "Public Presentation of Your Paper" are among the topics focused on. Though it could well be argued that Bazerman attempts to handle too many topics in Chapters 9 and 10, even his light touch on them is helpful.

Because the Bazerman text is fresh and inviting, and because it focused on little-discussed research skills, we nearly adopted it for our course. Some of its shortcomings, however, prevented our doing so. We wanted, for example, more on note-taking than one sample note card and a mere four pages on the topic. As well, we wanted more on the actual writing of a research paper, especially on documentation. The major weakness of this text, we felt, was the absence of enough sample selections to practice the various skills which the book teaches. If supplemented with a good reader offering various essays on the same topic, such as the second text to be discussed here, and perhaps with a thorough rhetoric, this text can be very useful. I find it, though not perfect, a welcome addition to the research text market. And it was our alternate textbook recommendation.

Another welcome addition, one which fills the "examples" gap left by the Bazerman text, is Behrens and Rosen's Writing and Reading Across the Curriculum. Because it does some of what The Informed Writer does, yet offers countless examples, this was the text we adopted as our first choice. The Behrens and Rosen book focuses on three essential research skills: summarizing, synthesizing, and critiquing. Chapter 1 discusses how to write summaries, syntheses, and critiques. Chapter 2 offers a practice unit with examples of these three types of writing. The remainder of the book, Chapters 3-12, offers units organized thematically: "Morality and the Movies," "The Great Depression," "A Closer Look at Fairy Tales," "Obedience to Authority," "The Age of Computers--and Beyond," "Death and Dying," "A Woman's Role," "Politics and Language," "Nuclear War--Inevitable?," and "Personality: A Rhetorically Organized Chapter." The numerous selections in each chapter offer students the opportunity to practice the skill of synthesizing information before the student enters the library to research a self-chosen topic. Thus the book serves as a mini-casebook.

That the selections in each unit are drawn from "across the curriculum" suggests the further richness of this text. The unit on "The Great Depression," for example, includes an interview by Studs Terkel, and excerpt from The Grapes of Wrath, newspaper articles, and a textbook chapter. Unit 9, "A Woman's Role," combines essays by Millett, Schlafly, Roiphe, and Friedan with excerpts from My Fair Lady and A Doll's House, along with theological opposed views by feminist theologian Mary Daly and by Pope Pius XI. The range of themes and selections is a definite plus of this text.

Also a plus is the range of research types provided by the text. We see magazine investigation, research for a government subcommittee, interviews by a single researcher, investigative reporting. Beyond that, the student has the opportunity, given the selections in each unit, to do research using the materials to hand.

The text also offers a range of writing styles and forms, another of its assets. It contains reports, interviews, essays, magazine and newspaper articles, excerpts from fiction. In the unit on "Obedience to Authority," for example, we find an official report to the Senate Armed Services Committee on the My Lai investigation, followed by an interview with Robert Jay Lifton on the same topic. In the unit on computers appear Newsweek research essays, other types of essays, and a newspaper column from the Washington Post. Both the examples of research and the multiplicity of subjects and writing forms make this text a useful one.

In addition, Behrens and Rosen conclude each selection with review questions, discussion questions, and writing suggestions. Each unit ends with "Summary, Synthesis, and Critique Activities," thus preserving the focus of the text on these three skills, and with "Research Topics and Additional Readings." Students interested in researching any of these topics are thus given a considerable head start with this book. The text ends with a chapter illustrating the rhetorical modes and concludes with a Rhetorical Index.

Both texts are innovative and of much potential use in courses teaching the research paper, whether for part of or an entire term. One of the central values of both texts is their acknowledgement that the concept of research is broader than the activity of recording information from books and periodicals in a library. From the discussion presented in Bazerman and the range of sources used in Behrens and Rosen, the apprentice researcher is exposed to a more genuine view of research than that usually presented in research texts. Though neither is perfect (Behrens and Rosen is perhaps top-heavy with examples and shy on discussions on how to write research papers--but then such a discussion was not part of their stated intention) and though using the two in tandem might be overkill, they are welcome and fresh additions to the textbook market. With only slight reservations, I recommend both highly.

FRINGE BENEFITS

David C. Nelson

Five years ago this fall, the Arts and Sciences Dean summoned me to his office with a special assignment in mind--an experiment as he put it. Within a week or so classes were to resume, and if he had his way I would be teaching a section of English Composition 101. As an instructor of German, I had figured I'd again be carrying a normal load in my area of training, but that wasn't to be the case--not entirely. And of course my first reaction to his request was one of desperation. Refuse as quickly and politely as possible, I told myself. But I was soon fairly well cornered. Both he and his desk blocked my route of escape, and besides, he had access to my phone numbers at home and at school. Simply stated, there was nowhere to hide.

After a little of his cajoling and several convincing arguments (enrollment in German was down somewhat, the English Department needed help, and I appeared to be the best qualified among the German instructors for the task), I consented and was soon on my way to the English office for desk copies and permission to attend a graduate seminar designed for novices in the teaching of composition.

Ten semesters later I'm still at it--teaching comp--and on the whole enjoying it, even the paper work. For it seems that just about every one of those lengthy grading sessions yields some unexpected delights: comic relief, student bloopers that have tickled my ribs or on occasion fractured my funny bone. I offer below a sampling from my growing collection, hoping that readers will enjoy them half as much as I did the first time around.

> She looked around in the freezer section, finally pulling out a quart of Dream Wipe.
>
> The summer after graduation I worked for a moving company as a packer of household ideals.
>
> The wife dressed in black, her dress, shoes and stockings proceeded to the front of the church followed by all the relatives.
>
> The young boy chewed his bubble gum, smacking his jaws.
>
> The windows are decorated with spider webs, enamoring dead insects and small pieces of straw. Bridals hung from the nails hammered into a nearby post.

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Being an assistant manager at Burger King, the Whopper has special significance for me.

He pedaled down the highway in a mythological way, his body tensed, muscles showing, as they grew larger in his intense flight.

She poured the thick yellow mixture onto the hot grill, sizzling upon contact. She then quickly flipped the bottom side, displaying a tan-brown underhalf.

The teeth-brushing ends with one last vigorous stroke, which reminds me of a football team in sudden death overtime, giving it everything they have.

Soon the water level in the toilet was restored. Lingering for a moment, it remains tranquil until flushed again.

He sat on his wooden desk chair, left arm leaning on the desk, right arm guiding its hand across the paper.

Then a stillness was befallen; his stomach motionless, his tongue limpless, his tail still and eyes fixed--death.

Her lips, which form snuggly around her gums, make her mouth appear pucked, of which she sings in Norwegian.

I dropped a quarter into the pop machine, sliding into the change box.

LANGUAGE ACROSS THE CURRICULUM

Christopher Thaiss

"Language across the curriculum" means basically two things. First, it means that gaining power in all the modes of language--writing, reading, speaking, and listening--must take place in every school course and at every school level, if this growth is to be deep and substantial. This meaning rejects the notion that the diverse uses of language are best learned in specific "skills" courses in, for example, English or speech. Second, "language across the curriculum" stresses the interrelationship of the modes: one learns to write _as_ one learns to speak _as_ one learns to read and listen. Each ability, therefore, improves to the extent that all are exercised. This second meaning rejects the teaching of, for example, writing or reading in relative isolation from the other. Ultimately, these two meanings of language across the curriculum come together in a third: the inseparableness of language, thinking, and learning. If we do not apply the full range of our language resources to our learning of any subject, then we stifle thought, conscious and unconscious, and so deprive ourselves of more than the most superficial understanding.

History and Theory

Language across the curriculum is hardly a new idea. Teachers in every age have seen that learning flourishes in rich environments that regularly challenge students to manipulate ideas through writing and through talk between teacher and student, parent and child, peer and peer. Furthermore, it has probably never been doubted that the ability to communicate is profoundly connected to the desire to share and acquire knowledge. After all, teachers and textbook writers at all levels have tried to make language instruction "interesting." Model essays, speech and discussion topics, and even workbook sentences--all are presumably chosen (though not always successfully) to excite the wonder and curiosity of the student. Nevertheless, the very fact that so much has been done to fabricate a learning context for language instruction shows that language across the curriculum, if not a new idea, was for a time submerged. Clearly, school curricula became divided--for various reasons--into "content" and "skills" courses, and educators created the circumstances out of which language across the curriculum would have to re-emerge as a fresh concept.

Much credit for this resurgence belongs to the British Schools Council Project in Writing Across the Curriculum, which from the mid-1960's onward studied how writing--and talk--were

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learned and used in schools throughout the United Kingdom. In a series of books (e.g., Britton 1970, and Martin et al. 1976), the Schools Council Project reported that the vast majority of school-based talking and writing was not "genuine communication," in which one person tries to convey new knowledge to another, but was mere giving back of information to the teacher in the role of judge. This "bogus" communication not only limited drastically the student's use of language, but produced dull, inauthentic responses. Conversely, when students were encouraged to write for audiences who would be interested in learning something new from the student (for example, readers of the school newspaper), researchers found the writing more lively and engagement with the topic more intense. Likewise, in language-rich classes, such as science labs where teams of students freely conversed in order to solve problems raised by an experiment, scripts showed that the give-and-take sparked varied language uses, including speculation and argument, plus the desire to repeat experiments or try new ones in order to answer new questions.

In the United States, Janet Emig (1977) reinforced the Schools Council conclusions by bringing to bear on the issue of language and learning the discoveries of linguistics and cognitive psychology. Vygotsky (1962), Kelly (1969), Bruner (1971), and Jaynes (1977) had found close correlation between verbalizing, in speech and writing, and the ability to assimilate perceptions. Particularly important was the recognition that language itself, whether read or heard, could be understood only if the individual translated the messages of others into his or her own words. Thus, conviction of the usefulness of language as a tool of learning grew.

Meanwhile, research on written composition began giving overwhelming evidence of the importance of talk in the development of writing ability. Britton (1967, 1975), in conceptualizing writing as a "process," defined "expressive writing," a form nearest to talk, as the matrix out of which more sophisticated written communication necessarily developed. He and other members of the Schools Council Project, as well as Moffett (1968), gave examples of classrooms in which the cultivation of many forms of discourse led to writing that showed fluency and awareness of audience. Writers such as Macrorie (1977) and Elbow (1973) demonstrated that talk about writing, especially within small groups of writers, could spark livelier, more coherent writing. Further studies of the speaking-writing connection have been brought together by Kroll and Vann (1981).

Implications for Teaching: Faculty Training

One meaning emphatically not implied by language across the curriculum is that the content area teacher must also become a specialist in the teaching of speech, a specialist in the teaching of writing, and so forth. What is required is that teachers look for ways to increase or vary the language experiences that will help students understand and explore the subject matter of the course. As language-across-the-curriculum workshops continually demonstrate, teachers in every field are already creating language-rich environments. Most of their techniques can be applied rather easily by their colleagues (Fulwiler and Young 1982, Griffin 1982, Thaiss 1983).

Typically, these ideas and practices are disseminated through inservice workshops or institutes. Beginning in the 1970's, federal, state, and local sponsorship of faculty training programs, particularly at the college level, has encouraged language across the curriculum to proliferate in the United States, with special emphasis on the uses and improvement of writing. For K-12 teachers, leadership in language across the curriculum has been taken by the 102 sites of the National Writing Project, which has expanded its inservice network to include teachers in all fields. Summer seminars sponsored by the National Endowment for the Humanities at Beaver College (Penn.) have also contributed to the colleges-schools liaison in writing across the curriculum.

In the cross-curricular course conducted by the National Writing Project sites, faculty training occurs in two reinforcing ways: (1) NWP-trained teachers from different fields, for example, history and physics, conduct presentations on successful language-across-the- curriculum practices in their classrooms; and (2) class members practice writing-and-speaking-to-learn techniques, such as learning logs and focused small-group discussions, throughout the semester. Many such courses are set up for the faculty of a single school, to insure the continuing exchange of ideas and often to initiate school-wide curriculum reforms. Though the contributions of language arts and English specialists are almost always important in these faulty-training programs, whether in colleges or schools, most programs are geared toward developing an interdisciplinary focus, with ongoing leadership coming from diverse departments.

Implications for Teaching: Techniques

In accordance with writing-process theory and the pioneering British research, the most successful language-and-learning practices tend to promote relatively unpressured expression, emphasizing techniques that encourage imagination and intuition. Journals and logs, small-group projects, teacher-student dialogues, and role playing are popular devices. Traditional content-area assignments such as research papers and laboratory reports are reinterpreted in terms of process theory, so that the research paper may become an "I-Search" project (Macrorie 1980), with significant expressive writing and classroom interaction, while the lab report may be divided into steps--method, observations, analysis--with each successive portion discussed by class groups.

Student journals of various types have been particularly powerful, and popular, learning tools. Regular writing to record or to analyze speculatively has long been practiced by professionals in many fields; thus, teachers tend to take readily to this form of instruction. In process terms, journals (often called learning logs, reader response logs, or any of a number of other names) encourage and teach expressive writing. Entries can also become the basis for more formal papers, when students' writing is carried through revision and editing stages. As a learning tool, the journal provides ample practice for translation of reading assignments or lectures, as well as labs and other kinds of experience, into the writer's own words; thus the journal can improve reading and listening comprehension (Wotring and Tierney 1982).

Journals are also adaptable to more- or less-structured learning situations. Teachers can make the journal an open-ended daily or weekly assignment, or they can use the journal for speculative answers to specific study questions. Some teachers ask students to sharply focus their entries on analysis of reading, lectures, or experiments; others want their students to exploit the journal's power as an emotional, psychological release (Progoff 1975). Many use the journal, with entries voluntarily read aloud in class, as a spur to class discussion while other teachers maintain a separate "journal dialogue" with each student in writing (Staton 1984).

The teacher's response to and evaluation of journals, as of other popular language-across-the-curriculum devices, is crucial to their effectiveness. The Schools Council research gave early evidence that expressive writing, like oral brainstorming, would fail if teachers did not continually nurture students' risk taking in analysis or speculation. Using the journal as a facts quiz or marking entries for mechanical errors would defeat its purpose. Guarding students' privacy, by allowing them to withhold certain entries and by never demanding that students read entries aloud, also seems essential. On the other hand, since teachers often find expressive forms new to their students, it is important to show students how to make the most of the freedom to interpret and imagine that these forms offer them.

Implications for Curriculum Change

In most schools and colleges with language-across-the-curriculum programs, change has meant more variety in how language is used and learning accomplished. Where language across the curriculum has affected school programs, this change has taken such forms as increases in team-taught courses, cooperative relationships among sections of English and sections of other subjects, or the use of "writing intensive" courses in content areas to fulfill composition requirements. In some instances it has meant the full interweaving of all language instruction into the learning of such subjects as history, art, mathematics, and science. Full applications of language across the curriculum have been most smoothly undertaken in schools with a history of interdisciplinary planning and in the all-subjects classroom in the elementary grades. In whatever setting it occurs and however deeply it affects structure, language across the curriculum promotes the fruitful, invigorating exchange of perspectives and methods among teachers who all too often have been strangers across the curricular walls.

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BOOKLET GIVES RESEARCH-BASED PLAN FOR TRAINING PEER TUTORS IN WRITING

Research shows that underprepared college writers develop more rapidly in one-to-one lab situations than in large classes. But how can teaching-by-tutorial be managed in the face of the sheer numbers of students needing help? Training Tutors for Writing Conferences, the latest title in the Theory and Research into Practice Series, tells how above-average student writers can be trained to become effective tutors, and how they themselves grow as writers through the tutoring experience. Training Tutors is published by the National Council of Teachers of English and the ERIC Clearinghouse on Reading and Communication Skills.

Authors Thomas J. Reigstad, State University College at Buffalo, and Donald A. McAndrew, Indiana University of Pennsylvania, begin by sketching the theories and research findings on which their tutor-training program is based. Their 15-week sequence makes use of prospective tutors' own writing to teach them to analyze each step in the writing process. It helps tutors to deal first with higher-order concerns when reviewing a student's draft. Questions of thesis or focus, voice or tone, organization, and development of ideas are dealt with before weaknesses in sentence structure, usage, and mechanics. Training includes techniques for helping the reluctant student generate ideas and narrow a proposed topic.

Tutors learn the art of shifting roles, from "friendly authoritarian" to "interested but sometimes confused reader" wanting to "help the writer state ideas more clearly." A series of handouts and critique checklists prompts tutors to monitor and perfect their conference techniques.

The authors give a detailed outline of the tutoring process, from getting acquainted with a student through the final encouragement, offered on completion of a paper. They suggest questions tutors should ask and phrases they can use to help inexperienced students see writing as a logical, learnable sequence of activities.

(Training Tutors for the Writing Process by Thomas J. Reigstad and Donald A. McAndrew. 43 pages, paperbound. Price $4.00; NCTE members, $3.50. Available from NCTE, Urbana, Illinois. Stock No. 55065.)

THE ARTS IN LANGUAGE ARTS: ACTIVITIES RELATING VISUAL ART TO THE LANGUAGE ARTS ON THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL LEVEL

Willet Ryder and Eleanor Ryder

The use of a combined approach employing the visual arts and the language arts can provide many exciting ways to enhance the elementary school curriculum. The following article will discuss three distinct activities for the elementary school which are based on this stimulating interplay.

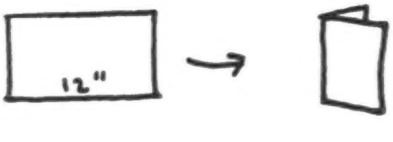
1. Origami Puppets: Puppets have always afforded children a unique opportunity to be creative. This is true both in the process of creating a puppet and in the presentation of a puppet show. The use of simple paper puppets based on Origami are easy to make, and provide a very expressive activity for elementary level children.

In such an activity, children should be encouraged to write, produce, and direct their own puppet plays which utilize the puppets they have created. This may be accomplished in a group approach, where a number of children work up a play for a variety of puppets, or using an individual approach in which each child makes up a play for one or two puppets. In either case, the importance of language, including sentence structure, punctuation, and usage, is an integral part of script writing.

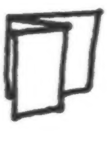
One of the biggest assets in creating paper puppets is their simplicity in terms of material and manufacture. Elaborate and expensive materials are unnecessary; thus even the meagerly endowed school can become involved in such a project. The basic materials needed are colored construction paper (9" X 12"), scissors, and white glue.

The method for folding such a puppet is as follows:

a. Begin by holding the paper with the 12" side at the bottom, and folding it in half.



b. Next, fold back one side of one of the halves like this:



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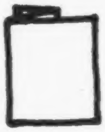
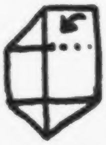
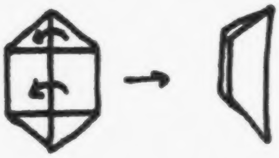
c. Press the folds down tightly, and place the folded side face down on the desk or table.



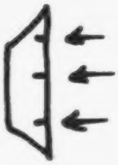
d. Then, fold the four corners in even triangles like this:



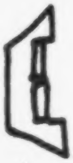
e. This shape should then be folded in half in the following manner.



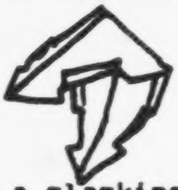
f. Next, make three small cuts (about 1/2" each) at the following points:

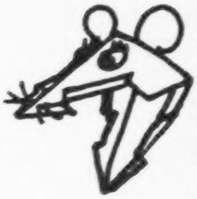


g. Now, fold back the flaps on both sides of the puppet head.



h. Open the puppet, and bend it in the center like this:





A healthy puppet should make a clacking sound when it is closed. Decorate it imaginatively: A wide variety of materials may be utilized for this purpose, including construction paper, yarn, foil, tissue paper, buttons, etc. It should be noted that although glue is needed for the decorations, no glue is needed for the initial head. The children can also design and attach puppet bodies if they wish.

2. Balloon Day--Pen-Pals & Portraits: Each spring, the Weekly Reader sponsors a contest which utilizes helium filled balloons in an effort to contact new pen-pals. Such an activity generates a great deal of school spirit by providing an exciting visual spectacle. Although this is a good advertisement for the Weekly Reader, it is also a fine way to involve parents in school projects. For the inflation and stringing of hundreds of balloons requires not only helium (not provided by Weekly Reader), but also willing parental assistance.

After the balloons have been inflated and the strings have been attached, they are distributed to the various classes. Each child in each participating class receives a balloon. The children are asked to fill out cards with their name and school address. These cards inform the eventual finder of the balloon whom to contact.

Once contact is made with the new "balloon pen-pals", the children begin using their writing skills in formulating friendly letters. A fine addition to such a venture is to have the children draw self-portraits, and send them along with their letters. It is very interesting to see how each child perceives himself or herself, and this practice supplies another idea which each child can write about.

Each year, the Medford Elementary School in Patchogue, New York, sends up approximately 600 balloons. The sight of all those balloons sailing into the sky is a truly amazing one, which intrigues both children and faculty members alike.

3. Herstory--Portraits of Famous American Women: The major goal of this activity is to acquaint fourth grade students with some famous women of America. The activity is launched by having each child select a famous woman and do independent research about her. Since we study famous Americans in the fourth grade, and little or no information on women is available in most textbooks, such a project is very valuable.

After making their selections, the students write reports on the information they have gathered. Note-taking skills and the use of library research techniques are explained and employed at this time. Each child is then asked to make a cut-paper portrait of the woman chosen, based upon the research done. The children cut out the figures and clothing from colored construction paper, adding yarn and fabric in some cases. The various parts are then glued together with white glue. The varied characterizations of the women chosen for this project never cease to amaze.

After the cut-paper portraits are completed, the children consolidate their research reports on index cards, and attach these to their art works. In this portion of the activity, the skills of choosing the most important elements of a person's life, and learning to write "summaries" is stressed. Each child is then given the opportunity to report on his or her famous American, using the portrait and summary cards. After the reports, the portraits are exhibited in the hallway for others to see.

This activity makes children aware that there are many unfamiliar people who helped make our country great! Some famous

American women who have been highlighted in this activity are Marian Anderson, Elizabeth Blackwell, Mary M. Bethune, Shirley Chisholm, Amelia Earhart, Chris Everett, Dorothy Hamill, Helen Keller, Sybil Luddington, Dolly Madison, Rosa Parks, Pocahontas, Eleanor Roosevelt, Sacajewea, Deborah Sampson, Maria Tallchief, Harriet Tubman, Phyllis Wheatley, and Laura Ingalls Wilder.

The foregoing activities illustrate three distinct ways to relate the visual arts and the language arts on the elementary school level. In each case, the marriage of these two subjects can provide the elementary level child with an enriching and exciting experience.

NCTE

ON WRITING ACROSS THE CURRICULUM

BACKGROUND: Writing is a significant life skill, a valuable means of self expression, and an important part of educational achievement and career success. If young people do not become skilled writers, their futures may be limited or seriously thwarted. The case is clear: students must learn to write.

We know that the composing process itself is a way of learning and that students need many opportunities to write if they are to become proficient, artful writers. In far too many instances students do no writing at all except in composition courses. If all teachers in the school taught writing within their subject areas, students would learn those subjects in greater depth and at the same time become more proficient writers. Be it therefore

RESOLVED, that the National Council of Teachers of English affirm the position that students should write frequently in every course as a way of learning the subject matter and of sharpening their writing skills; and

that NCTE seek ways to provide assistance to teachers of other subject matter disciplines in their efforts to improve students' writing skills in all subject matter fields.

THE LANGUAGE ARTS AND MUSIC: RECENT RESEARCH

Ruth Zinar

During a meeting of one of my music methods courses, the integration of music activities into the classroom was being discussed. One of the students told of her difficulty in trying to have the children memorize the plural forms of certain words ending in "y." It took just a little while to work out the rhythm chant:

Change the "y" to an "i"
And add "e, s" And then
you'll have some more!

She tried it--and the children loved it. They worked with delight on "y" words--lady, baby, fly, sky, hobby--chanting the verse as they wrote the plurals.

Suppose you were asked to repeat the following: "Es, bay, gee, hay, zup, ef, pow, ex, moo, rat, if, hi, ex, zow...."

Yet, little nursery school children learn the letters of the alphabet, mere nonsense to them, and they do it more easily because the rhythms and the melody of the alphabet song are there to help them.

Among the most serious problems teachers have to face is helping the child who reads below grade level. Certainly, all possible solutions should be explored. One of the most valuable aids the English teacher can use is Music. Not only can it help the slow learner, but it can enrich the instruction of all pupils and enhance their creativity.

Why use music in teaching writing, reading, or spelling? Is is really of value? Or is it just another "frill?"

A number of recent studies have attempted to determine what effects, if any, music instruction or the actual incorporation of music into the Language Arts curriculum can have on reading scores, reading readiness, language development and sound-symbol recognition. A vast majority of them demonstrate a positive effect.

In 1978, for example, Martha Wagley investigated the effects of music on the cognitive and affective development of sound-symbol recognition of pre-school children and found that as a result of a reading program in which music was incorporated, 72 four- and five-year old children in two day-care centers showed a marked increase in their enjoyment and a notable "trend" in their understanding of this aspect of reading.[1]

Michael Gordon found similar benefits. In his experiment, reported in 1977, he selected, on the basis of the children's musical aptitude and interest in playing a band instrument, 54 fourth graders from each of two inner-city school districts. Half of these pupils in each school--those reading on grade level--were not given music lessons. The other half, the experimental group of children who were given lessons on a band instrument,

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were one year delayed in reading.

At first, the experimental group was given music lessons regularly. In the next phase, in order to receive a music lesson, a child in the experimental group had to meet individual criteria in reading. In other words, instruction in music was a reward, contingent upon improvement in reading. The results were significant. While there was a large difference between the two groups in reading ability at the pre-test, there was none at the post-test. Music instruction, Gordon found, can provide excellent motivation for increasing actual daily reading performance.[2]

In Linda Kelly's "Combined Experimental and Descriptive Study of the Effect of Music on Reading and Language,"[3] first grade children were assigned to groups which met three times a week for 6 months. They were given pretests in reading readiness, following directions, and basic skills (including the "Draw a Person" test) and then one of the groups was given instruction in what is called "Orff Schulwerk." Developed by the composer Carl Orff, who died recently, this is a program which includes rhythmic response, word chanting, and creative instrumental activities.

In this study, as in the others, the music group began at a lower reading level. By the end of the program, they had improved enough in reading and related areas so that they reached the level of the other children. In addition, any adverse effect of non-English home language was overcome only by the children receiving the Orff music lessons.

One of the most dramatic experiments of the past ten years was done by Diana Nicholson.[4] She used fifty children, aged six to eight, slow learners with I. Q.'s of 80-95, and taught them through a special program that included body movement to illustrate concepts of slow and fast and high and low, singing alphabetical tones, controlling mood through music, and listening to records--at first for one minute and then gradually increasing the time span to five minutes. The control group had an "average" music program which was not as creative. It did not include learning to read music, using music to control mood, or the same work in increasing the listening attention time span.

At the end of the school year, the improvement in the experimental group was marked. Their average pretest score in reading was 1.22; the post-test average was 3.77. The control group started at the same level and by the end of the year, their average score was only 1.38.

But it is not just little children who can benefit from music instruction. In some cases, researchers have investigated integrating music into the Language Arts curriculum of junior and senior high school pupils. In others, musically talented adolescents, retarded in reading, were given the opportunity to study music.

One such study, "The Effects of Music Correlation on Eleventh Grade Students' Attitudes Toward and Concept Mastery of American Literature of the Jazz Age,"[5] was completed about two years ago. Caroline Lee selected stories, poems and plays of the Jazz Age and correlated them with music of the same period. Similarities in form, mood, and theme were emphasized. At first, one unit of literature was taught without using music and then, one unit combining music and literature. Not only did the students indicate their preference for the experimental method, but there was much more achievement by all the classes when they were taught by the combined music and literature method.

All the research described so far has been done within the past ten years. Many other studies had been done earlier. In one of these, done in 1967,[6] Esther Seides tried to discover whether adolescents, talented in music but slow in learning to read, would improve in reading and mathematical achievement if given music lessons. She selected 84 students at a Bedford-Stuyvesant, New York City, junior high school. They all had I.Q.'s of 75-90 and read at least two years below grade level. They were divided into three groups. Some talented pupils were placed in a "regular" class. Some talented pupils were placed in a music talent class. And there was a group of non-talented pupils in a "regular" class. One year later, when they were retested, the slow learners talented in music who were given music lessons showed greater achievement in arithmetic, reading and creativity. Their self-image was higher and their average Word Knowledge and Reading scores were 5.7 and 5.6 respectively, compared to the other groups' 4.7 and 4.8.

Why does music help? At this stage, we can only hypothesize. There is no doubt that music integrated into the Language Arts curriculum can add another dimension and modality to the teaching-learning process. In addition to visual stimuli, music can be heard, moved to, and sung. Thus, it provides multi-sensory appeal.

Music adds fun and pleasure to the classroom. Anything we enjoy learning, we learn faster and remember longer. Children love music. Its power and appeal to the emotions, its ability to affect mood, have been known through the ages. By using this power, the teacher can have another tool with which to work.

That music can provide motivation for the study of other subjects has been demonstrated by some of the research described. Some children want music so much, they are even willing to study and work at their other subjects in order to have it! To paraphrase a well-known "commercial": "Everybody can't do something, but nobody can't do nothing in Music!" The improved self-image that can come with achievement in music can give children the additional confidence they need to achieve more in other subject areas.

Then too, there are certain connections between eye and ear and understanding which exist in both language reading and music. The words of a song are read from left to right and from one line to the next. Music is read from left to right and from one line to the next. In order to correctly sing words to a melody, it is necessary to know how to divide them into syllables and which syllables to emphasize. Thus, additional highly motivating practice in reading can be provided.

Some recent studies in how the brain functions have shown that reading engages chiefly the left side of the brain. Listening to music primarily involves the right side of the brain. When one sings from a text, therefore, or "hears" inside oneself the music to words of a song which one is writing, or reads music, both the left and right sides of the brain are equally involved. Perhaps that is why music can aid language arts instruction; it uses more of the individual's capacities.

All of us have the need to express ourselves and for some people, music may be the only, or the most natural, or the easiest, or the most enjoyable way. By adding music to the classroom, by integrating it with the Language Arts curriculum, we can give the child the emotional, aesthetic and intellectual fulfillment which cannot be met any other way.

NOTES

[1] Martha White Wagley, "The Effects of Music on Affective and Cognitive Development of Sound-Symbol Recognition Among Pre-School Children." (Unpublished doctoral dissertation. Texas Women's University, 1978).

[2] Michael Gordon, "The Effect of Contingent Music Instruction on the Language Reading Behavior and Musical Performance Ability of Middle School Students." (Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1977).

[3] Linda Louise Kelly, "A Combined Experimental and Descriptive Study of the Effect of Music on Reading and Language." (Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Pennsylvania, 1981).

[4] Diana Nicholson, "Music as an Aid to Learning." (Unpublished doctoral dissertation, New York University, 1972).

[5] Carolyn Sparks Lee, "The Effects of Music Correlation on Eleventh Grade Students' Attitudes Toward and Concept Mastery of American Literature of the Jazz Age." (Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Arkansas, 1980).

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THE WRITING PROCESS IN THE ELEMENTARY SOCIAL STUDIES PROGRAM

Frances B. Cacha

For years the teaching of language arts has been integrated with the social studies program. The cognitive processes developed in the context of learning concepts from the social sciences utilize many skills from the various language arts. With an increased emphasis on improving students' writing abilities, greater attention is being focused on this language art, and in particular, on teaching children the stages in the writing process. The principles and techniques of teaching writing as a process, advocated by such researchers as Graves (1983), Calkins (1984), and others can be applied to integrating writing with appropriate social studies projects.

The Stages in the Writing Process

The stages in the writing process described by the above researchers and outlined similarly in the curriculum bulletins of California (1983) and New York State (1983) are: prewriting, drafting, revising, editing, and publishing.

1. Prewriting Before children can write something which is meaningful and worthwhile, they need a background of experiences upon which they can focus and elaborate. Particularly in social studies the teacher needs to plan for a great variety of strategies and activities so as to provide children with the necessary background of information on a topic. Many social science educators structure these activities into a hierarchy--from simple first hand experiences to abstract symbolic experiences. For example, Walsh (1980) divides the activities into four categories: direct concrete experiences, simulated concrete experiences, semiconcrete experiences, and indirect abstract experiences. The teacher then chooses activities from each category according to the age and intellectual development of each child.

The following list of strategies for teaching social studies content proceeds from more concrete experiences to the most abstract experiences. For each category below, discuss the content of the material or experience, pose critical and creative thinking questions, encourage children to ask questions and, then, help them to find the answers to their questions.

Provide first hand experiences by taking your students on field trips and by having them examine artifacts. Invite guest speakers to your classroom.

Show films, filmstrips, slides, transparencies, computer simulations, study prints, and pictures. Also, have these A-V materials available for students to use individually or in small groups.

Read to your class every day, e.g., poetry, folk tales, myths, legends, and fictionalized stories relevant to the topic.

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Display pictures, artifacts, models, etc.

Serve food of the country being studied.

Play the music and teach the dances, songs, and games of the country being studied.

Develop language experience charts with small groups of students.

Use maps, globes, charts, graphs, time lines, and flowcharts in your teaching.

Choose a wide variety of reading materials considering the interests and abilities of your students. Include both trade books and textbooks, as well as magazines and other print materials.

Many students need to express their ideas in some concrete form first before they can write about them. As an example, drawing a picture and then discussing it with a classmate or the teacher helps many students to organize and focus their thoughts. The following activities can be used as prewriting experiences in the elementary social studies classroom. Encourage your students to:

design arts and crafts projects, e.g. pictures in various media, murals, puppets, models, dioramas, mosaics, mobiles, collages, cartoons, and pictographs;

label pictures from magazines as well as label the arts and crafts activites cited above;

write captions for pictures; expand the captions to one or more sentences;

list the new vocabulary on a chart (Later the vocabulary chart can be used as a reference tool in the various stages of the writing process.);

arrange bulletin boards;

create situations for role-playing, sociodrama, and creative dramatics;

play word association games, "Twenty Questions," and other word games as well as doing crossword puzzles to develop and reinforce vocabulary;

develop concepts by grouping pictures according to one or more attributes; reverse the procedure by having the students state the categories with appropriate examples.

From the beginning of the unit, encourage and expect each student to create a list of potential writing projects related to the topic. From time to time have students revise their lists by adding or deleting ideas. Later, they can decide which projects are of sufficient interest to develop into writing pieces for publication. Examples of writing projects in elementary social studies are

> a sequence of events with a time line; a sequence of events in a process with a flowchart; a fictionalized account of a character in a country, era, etc.; a diary of a person taking a journey with a map of the route; a report with A-V aids; an inventory of supplies and their use on a trip; comparing and contrasting life styles in two different places; comparing and contrasting life today with some other place and time; a description of some economic condition with a graph; a forecast of a trend with a line graph; a

tall tale about an event or a person.

2. Drafting In this stage the student chooses an idea from the list of potential projects and starts to write a first draft about the topic. Students should be trained to leave one or two blank lines between each written line so as to facilitate revision. This also emphasizes the idea that this is a first draft, not a final copy, and, therefore, it is expected that the student will make one or more revisions in the future.

While students are drafting, it is important for the teacher to emphasize writing for fluency, with a purpose, and for an audience; and, at the same time, to deemphasize the mechanics of writing, such as spelling, punctuation, and sentence structure, as these can be corrected easily later on. Tell your students to do the best they can with the spelling and mechanics and to put a question mark over any word they need to check or any other problem they may perceive. During this time, the teacher should be most supportive of students' efforts by being available for consultation.

3. Revising Students need to be taught how to revise their drafts. One technique is to compose a piece of writing with the class, using chart paper or a transparency on an overhead projector. Leave enough space between the lines so that insertions can be made. Go back over the draft by asking pertinent questions such as

> Is the purpose of this piece clear? Is it addressed to the intended audience? Is it organized in the right order? Have we communicated our ideas clearly? Have we included all the information needed? Have we used some of the new vocabulary in our piece? Are the words used correctly? Does each sentence sound right? Can any idea be better stated? Have we repeated our ideas unnecessarily?

Next, based on the answers to the questions, make the needed insertions, deletions, etc. Rewrite the draft leaving space between the lines and repeat the process until you are ready to write a final copy.

Similar questions can be used as a checklist for students who have completed their first draft. Since it is difficult for any writer to be objective about his/her own writing drafts, students should be encouraged to share their writing in a conference with one or more of their peers. Knowing that their writing will be seen by others usually motivates children to do their best. Teacher-student conferences are also important at this point.

4. Editing The purpose of this stage is to focus on the mechanics of writing and to make the necessary corrections prior to publication. Make an appropriate checklist for editing also. When correcting their spelling, expect your students to check the vocabulary chart, dictionaries, thesauri, books, etc. Peer conferences as well as student-teacher conferences are an integral part of the editing process.

5. Publishing This is the final stage in the writing process. Not all pieces of writing that are started will reach this point. Whatever is published should be the best efforts of the students with all the corrections made that they can com-

prehend. The final copy must certainly be neat and legible.

The form of publishing can vary. Some suggestions follow: class book individual student booklets bulletin board displays in the classroom and/or halls class newspaper pen pal letters thank you letters to visitors and/or guest speakers letters of invitation to parents

While all steps in the writing process are important, the stage in the writing process in the elementary social studies classroom that requires the most careful preparation and time is the prewriting stage. Only when children have a rich background of appropriate concrete and abstract experiences can they write with fluency, clarity, and purpose.

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As writing-across-the-curriculum programs gain recognition in secondary school and university systems, writing theorists call composition teachers to work collaboratively in sharing materials and ideas for teaching writing. No teacher of the social sciences should be without Steward's and Smelstor's text of 32 carefully chosen, social science essays and suggestions for effective writing. The authors write from their experiences in teaching social science writers to discover writing patterns and to apply clarifying techniques. Both the composition teacher and the general writer can also benefit from its lessons and sample writing forms.

The authors divide the book into four parts: 1) the writing process and sample essays from professional writers about writing, 2) sample papers written for different purposes, 3) the influence of purposes on rhetorical choices and samples of research papers, and 4) a bibliography of research tools. After each section of sample papers, the authors give ideas for class discussion, followed by writing suggestions to appeal to various interests and abilities. The first part begins with practical advice for the writer who is beginning a paper: getting started by asking questions, brainstorming, and determining the purpose; choosing an attitude or position; deciding on the audience; researching; making a plan through an outline, thesis, or rough draft; writing; and revising by first considering how logical the paper is and later polishing it. The authors feel these steps are essential in gaining mastery over material and, consequently, in feeling achievement and reaching the audience.

The second chapter of Part I is what I consider the book's highlight, with the essays from professional writers Barbara Tuchman, John Galbraith, George Orwell, and Arthur Schlesinger. Their topics include the effects of politics and history on writing, but their practical messages for writers are invaluable. Tuchman claims practice is the best teacher for writers and that as the writer becomes involved with the subject, the reader will catch the enthusiasm. Galbraith suggests the writer should never wait for inspiration, while Orwell offers specific advice, such as avoiding metaphors, similes, unnecessary or long words, passive constructions, and jargon. Schlesinger, too, advises avoiding abstractions and euphemisms. The social science student will not only be reading about social science subjects, but will also be getting writing advice from the professionals and seeing that they, too, have had writing problems. Both the content area and the composition teachers will find that these essays aid their

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explanations of what good writing should be and provide interesting reading materials for their classes as well.

Part II deals with writing for a purpose, with sample essays on investigative, abstract, casual, persuasive, and analytical writing. These essays cover topics such as the universality of Shakespeare, effects of divorce, changes in education and in the American Presidency, economy, freedom, and labor unions; they include excellent concrete examples for interpreting facts, writing creatively, handling statistics, interviewing, and selecting data. Except for the well-thought-out discussion questions and writing activities, Steward and Smelstor seldom intervene--the essayists they have chosen and the lessons they offer speak for themselves.

Part III follows, with longer writing projects that show ways the same subject can be dealt with differently. Research papers show how research should be carefully collected and written to demonstrate a train of thought and to show how conclusions are reached. A practical and helpful conclusion to the text is Part IV's list of social science reference materials, visual techniques, and writing resources.

This book has a wealth of advice, followed by ideal examples for the general writer, the social science student and teacher, and the composition teacher. All should share this guide, since it has something to offer for both secondary and college students and since no teacher is exempt from teaching writing as an effective learning tool.

"WRITING-TO-LEARN"? BUT WE'VE SCARCELY BEGUN

James P. Beck

Never say the English field doesn't renew itself constantly. The scene is my study at 5:30 A.M. The coffee cup steams, the cat on the lap purrs, the radio leaks faint white music, and insomniac anyhow, I find myself pondering my current thorny topic-of-interest, writing across the curriculum. I've been pursuing it half out of intrinsic fascination--and half on assignment (heading our school's committee on it. . . .) In any case, I've been lamenting the absence of actual examples of good writing assignments, and more, have been realizing (suspecting? imagining?) that the real heart and thrust of the whole movement really has nothing to do with learning to write better as such. It doesn't deal, ultimately, with the mechanics of writing (chemistry or sociology teachers unwillingly worrying about comma splices--or refusing to). Nor even with the "conventions of written discourse in a discipline" (writing literary criticism; or a lab report). Nor even with content, the knowledge-level mastery of course-material (writing an essay-exam, but merely to repeat the lecture).

Rather, my sense is that WAC's reason-for-being has to do with thinking in the broader sense: the higher-level skills beyond rote memorizing, those of generalization, analysis, synthesis, application, interpretation. In short, the old classic (yet still very rare) "liberal education" you hear so much about (and see so little of). In journals and conferences I hear brave calls to teach "not what but how," to beware the reductionism of Back To Basics, to foster student responsiveness and responsibility. But around me in school, I see mainly Education As Usual, defined as the "transmission of information" delivered efficiently to a passive pupil who packages it right back, unthinkingly. (At six-weeks' exam time at our school, my building's corridor stairwells are jammed with crammers, students holding notebooks in front of hopelessly dour faces, seemingly practicing the intellectual bulimia of gorging on data they'll shortly purge out on the essay (or objective) test, in rote fashion. Unreal City, one can feel, and not the way I was taught to learn and to teach. But, the prevailing beat. . . .)

But how to move toward writing-to-learn? My latest idea, teasing my mind these mornings, is that, to foster thinking, not just writing or course-content, the key tactic lies in the careful design of assignments, for an exquisite balance between formula and freedom. Writing-to-learn should proffer both guidance (but not too much) and flexibility (but short of total "freedom"). But where, I have to ask, are existing examples of such assignments?

Agreed we need them. Are many assignments insidiously too formulaic? The student clambers mechanically through hurdles, or

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traces out blueprints, set up by the teacher. Or are a few assignments too openendedly amorphous? The student merely "expresses oneself," doesn't experience some higher-level intellectual process, however subliminal. I now beware over-structuring. To always state "exactly what's expected and exactly how to do it right," now seems to me an educational shortchanging--though 80% of students of course love it, and most teachers think it's "helpful." And many assignments are supposedly free-styled, but actually subtly prescriptive; they invite the student's response, but only toward what was in fact the Teacher's One Right Answer waiting there all the time. (How I recall the anxiety these caused me as a student. I could "express my opinion," but often got my paw nipped or slapped if I stepped off the hidden mark or path. . . .)

No; my metaphor now is that of a cattle-run or routing--or rather, an "overland livestock journey," let's say. (Huh?) Well, I mean, to teach critical thinking, my ideal assignment would guide toward the goal, but with the latitude of options en route. It doesn't just march the student through the rigid turns of some pen or corral, but doesn't just let them wander over the landscape either, maybe detouring into brambly byways. . . . In short: assignments which have a learning-goal, and yet latitude to permit (and gently enforce!) student creativity and diversity in reaching the goal.

But where *are* illustrative examples of such, from which I can learn? It's been an arduous odyssey for me to collect the ones that this article contains. First, years ago, my realizing how over-directive many assignments really are. Then, two years ago, discovering the writing-across-the-curriculum movement, and soon its potential for teaching thinking. Then, however, seeking those assignments which guide but also evoke; channel but also stimulate--and finding them rare indeed. Asking colleagues. Blearily searching "the literature" in ERIC. Attending a two-day national conference on writing-across-the-disciplines, but gleaning few if any bright flints and flakes of sample assignment-examples among the huge rubble-piles of abstract theorizing. Writing 30 conference participants afterwards and receiving only three replies. "Writing-to-learn?" I reflected. "But we scarcely seem to have begun. . . ."

Still, by now I've amassed some stimulating examples, and sensed some goals within just "thinking." These goals, as I see them, are (1) *Induction*, the student generalizing from data to concepts. ("From these twenty facts about the energy crisis, build a coherent theme.") (2) *Applying and relating* the course-principles to new situations, including both "real-world" events and also one's own personal life. (In psychology: "Employ Freud and Skinner to explain your friends' and your own specific behaviors.") (3) Holistic, *multi-stage* use of both right-brain intuition *first*, *then* left-brain logic (In political science: "Brainstorm many traits of a good president, then rank them in importance, saying why you chose which first, by what standards.") (4) *Communication*: being able to convey your knowledge to a real, but uninformed, reader. (Economics: "Explain 'circular flow' and 'leakage' to your parents; give examples from your own household experience." Composition: "Instruct younger children in how to use specific examples, or parallelism, in writing.")

I hope the following roster, of assignments recollected and adapted, can help diminish education as facts-only. The other day, Brian entered my composition class beaming. A good personal-experience writer but to date not a good analytical thinker, he had taken his first college-level essay exam, in a history class, not the usual objective-choice exams, and he was proud that he had indeed gotten an "A" for a piece of sustained _writing_. I congratulated him, but soon was less happy about things, privately, when I read his exam's question. Dealing with the course of constitutional developments over a period of time, it in essence merely asked the student to repeat back what the textbook and lecture had said. . . . I'm not claiming that summarizing and stating material clearly aren't skills both important, and difficult, for today's students. But can writing assignments also offer more?

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(1) EXACT OBSERVATION--THE INDUCTION OR GENERALIZATION

(1A) (_Composition_) "List twenty very specific observations about the raucous school cafeteria at high noon. Then find three general ideas which many of these specifics support. Write a five-paragraph theme from them."

(1B) (_Composition_) "Study these paired, good-and-bad, examples of the use (and misuse) of a particular writing skill (be it parallelism; specific detailing; good audience-relating; whatever). From these, and on your own--_before_ the teacher's formal instruction on the subject--generalize and derive some tips and hints or how-to's about using these skills well. Then, _after_ the lecture, critique your list, as to its good points present already, also errors or incompletenesses."

(1C) (_Literature_) "Read these early sonnets--Shakespeare, Milton, Wordsworth--and these twentieth-century poems on similar subjects. From this, begin to generalize about ways in which modern poetry is 'modern.' You might consider view of the world, type of language used--and try for four other categories."

(1D) (_Child Psychology_) "Observe a pre-schooler at play and describe in detail the activities, not interpreting or telling--"seemed nervous and paranoid"--but showing--'Larry interrupted his teacher three times and expressed fears of darkness.' Then prepare a report to audience of a child psychologist."

(2) SUMMARIZING, CONDENSING

(2A) (_History_) "Write a complete summary of guest lecture you attend, then reduce it to only one page--but don't leave any major point out, and be clear!"

(2B) (_Composition_) "Write for ten minutes summarizing a recent unit's lesson from another course--geology, whatever. But then also state the relevance of the learning to your understanding of yourself and/or the daily world."

(3) LEARNING ACADEMIC CONVENTIONS: RELATE KNOWLEDGE TO "SCHOOL FORMS"

(3A) (Art Appreciation) "Write a five-page description of an art object. Then, condense this to no more than one page, following closely the conventions of standard museum description."

(3B) (Literature) "Take a current event, or a journal entry of your own, and 'poeticize' it--cast it in the form and style of any poem or type of poem which the class has been studying. State three poetic traits you imitated."

(3C) (Biology) "Compare a literary treatment of biology (such as Leopold's Sand Country Almanac, or Thomas' Lives of a Cell) with the corresponding scientific description in the textbook. Do the two differ in: purposes; language-use; author-attitude; method of observing and concluding? Discuss--and then, make some generalizations about what 'science' is and is not."

(3D) (History) "Read a 19th-century novel. Can you see connections between the novel and the material in your history textbook? Refer to specific portions in the novel and the textbook--but how many points you make, and in what order, are to be decided by you, the student-writer, not by the instructor."

(4) RELATING COURSE-CONTENT TO ONE'S OWN SELF, ALSO THE NON-SCHOOL "REAL WORLD"

(4A) (Death & Dying) "Keep a course journal. Record connections (and any conflicts or contradictions) between the course content, and daily events in the world; and your own emerging emotions about and responses to the course."

(4B) (Psychology) "Review Erikson's theory of psychological development: the stages of the senses of trust-mistrust, autonomy-shame and doubt, initiative-guilt, industry-inferiority, identity-role confusion. Indicate which sense is more characteristic of you, and why you believe this. Write your essay as an Eriksonian autobiography to facilitate someone else's understanding of your own psychosocial development."

(4C) (Economics) "You are talking with your parents, who wish to know what you're learning at school. Explain the term 'leakage' as it relates to the 'circular flow' concept. Then describe a type of leakage taking place in your parents' own household. Be specific, and explain how that example of leakage affects Aggregate Demand."

(5) COMMUNICATION TO UNINFORMED, LAY-NOVICE AUDIENCE: INSTRUCTING CLEARLY.

(5A) (Composition) "Prepare a manual on a skill we've studied--such as parallelism, specific detailing, syntax, etc.--which will effectively enable a student from two grade-levels below you, to understand and also to do that skill."

(5B) (Composition; or Any Course) "Take your formal library research paper, and abridge and recast it to reach a specific audience, with a specific purpose beyond your merely demonstrating mastery of the content to the teacher-as-examiner." (For instance: the metric system, or vegetarianism--to business executives; Americans travelling abroad; social science class studying resistance to change; campers and canoeists; etc.)

(6) EVALUATE, TAKE A STAND, JUDGE, ESTIMATE:

(6A) (<u>Psychology</u>) "Referring to the three viewpoints for explaining human behavior--the biological, the psychological, and the social-behavioral--choose one aspect of your own behavior, or of general human behavior, which lends itself to being explained from each of these viewpoints. Write a short paper explaining the behavior from each. Then select one viewpoint as `best' and defend it and discredit the other two. Or select all three and incorporate the viewpoints into a plausible, coherent single explanation of the behavior. Audience and purpose: a friend, to help that friend to understand the viewpoints--and to try to be convincing about them."

(7) <u>IN</u>-<u>CLASS</u> WRITING, TO ACHIEVE VARIOUS EDUCATIONAL GOALS:

(7A) (<u>Any course</u>) "Summarize the day's readings on the topic before the lecture upon it," or "write down your existing images and recollections of the topic before the lecture"--e.g., before the transportation unit in the local history, freewrite about your knowledge of trains.

(7B) (<u>Any course</u>) "Since our discussion of this particular topic now seems blocked or wayward, write in your journals for five minutes to clarify the issue at hand. Then use it to help us to continue discussion."

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So much for a basic roster of goals with examples. I then saw a new major subtype, a two-stage approach. First, use a right-brain personal attack, then move to a more formal analysis, using course-criteria and the responses of others (peers, instructor). This to involve the student more, and blend freedom with judicious directions. Examples of this personal-then-formal approach:

(<u>Safety Education</u>--or, <u>any skills course</u>) "Read this description of an accident. Then write, quickly, to analyze the problem and recommend course of action. Then, discuss your response with your peers, sharing and evaluating differing responses. Then, after discussion, re-evaluate your response. What is the `correct' solution here, and what judgments are legitimately arguable?"

And, for a high school <u>social studies</u> class, three examples of blending initial open-ended activites with later more guided ones:

On Capital Punishment. "Write down all your opinions for and against the practice. For each one, decide what the opposing argument might be. Then, write a short paper making your <u>own</u>

stand on the practice. *Then*, read the reserve material in the Media Center and find *other* arguments. Blend your own and other arguments to revise your paper. Then, in small groups, assess."

On World Leaders. "List the ten most important world personalities of the year, in your opinion. Rate them in the order of importance, and give reasons for your judgment. Then, in small groups, 'go to it'--find out who differs, and why. Can you find any objective criteria for judgment--or are all standards all subjective? Finally, take this list of various social groups (political, ecological, minority rights, etc.) and predict how they would make their own list and why."

On The Presidency. "You are a candidate for the U. S. Presidency. Write a resume of your (ideal!) qualifications based on your (ideal) past life up to candidacy. Also explain the stand you'd take on five important issues of the day--list the most important ones first. Defend your stand against what your TV opponents in a debate would say. In small groups, then compare who chose which issues as more and less important. By what standards or criteria--objective and subjective--should and can rankings be made?"

Other examples of the students' first getting personally, intuitively involved with the subject, and only then, applying course-given guidelines to the material they have generated--balancing formula and freedom thus:

(*Composition*; or, *Any Course* "Before starting work on a formal library research paper, brainstorm and prewrite freely, to establish your personal interests in and connections with the topic, and to generate the probing questions you should ask from the library sources you'll read later." (P.S.--class after freshman class of mine report 100% that this warmup ploy really helped. . . .)

(*Literature*) "Write a ten-minute burst of every question you can ask about this poem by Whitman. Then, assess the questions. Which call for factual knowledge only; and which for judgments? Which can really be said to have 'one right answer'--and which can truly allow for disagreement? Which seem mere recall of lecture or textbook facts about the poem--and which can stimulate further thinking, in a group discussion or a solo paper? Which seem to raise or lead to more general questions about Whitman, about poems, about literature?"

(*Art History*) "Describe your personal impressions of a painting or other work of art about which you now have *no* background information. (I.e., personal like or dislike and why? Opinion as to good or bad art and why? Puzzlements?) Then, research the work--or read textbook and listen to lecture. Then, analyze how your new knowledge affected your initial impression. Did it reinforce, modify, alter your original views?"

(*Literature*) "Early in the course, write a 'good' short story--of your own. Then, after the course's unit on fiction, rewrite, and analyze the changes you made to improve and alter, and why you did so."

(*Composition*) "To practice specific detailing, write an imaginary account of how a flock of giant killer grasshoppers devastated a Great Plains town. Then, after learning about eight types of detailing (such as statistics, quotations, anecdotes) and thin vs. rich details (telling vs. showing), evaluate your draft. Where is it already good, intuitively using some of these techniques? Where can you see now that it can be improved?"

(*Composition*) "Write a paper upon a topic of personal concern to you--make it a richly personal, expressive paper. Then, use Reader's Guide to find four different magazine feature articles on the same topic, but of various types--scholarly, popular, special-interest, etc. Also, take this list of ways of developing a topic (heuristics for invention). Analyze: how did you already use some of these ways (e.g., compare-contrast; relate past-present)? How can you use ways you didn't? And compare the magazine articles--where did they do things better, or just differently, than you did? Improve your own article then."

(*Business Education*) "List the desirable traits for a good office copying machine--simply by free-association. Then, use this checklist of ways to explore a topic (heuristics for invention). How many ways did you intuitively use to find traits--how many ways can you now see how to use? Pool the results in small groups. Finally, read this professional article on the same subject of machines."

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The time: 7:00 A.M. The meditative music becomes news, the tap water starts to run elsewhere in the house, and the cat jumps off my lap to investigate. I now inspect my latest sequenced assignment, for this week's writing class. On titles, it runs something like this. (1) "Survey six magazines in the library, of various types, from this list. Study their title-pages. Assume that a title's *purpose* if to inform and interest the reader and also convey the tone or attitude as well as the content of the article. Then, from the above, on your own, generate: (A) a classification of types of titles, (B) a brief manual on tips for writing good titles, including possible ranges or varieties possible (as in length; degree of formality-informality; and other options). Now, rewrite the titles of two of your own past papers, to improve them." Later, in class, we'll of course compare work--but cooperatively, not competitively, looking not for the One Right Answer, but "as many possibilities as possible." I am seeking to reward individual approaches and styles. And *only then* will I give my spiel on titles: five main types of, the use of word-play in, and the rest. All to foster latitude, individuality, prior engagement along with direction and correction.

Not that my approach of student-initiative always works smoothly. I'm still smarting from last month's freshman lit-and-comp class's disastrous pileup. We had studied composition for the first six weeks, then had been reading--without much formal analysis of it--two weeks of poetry. I had then said: "In an essay of your own, discuss *poetry as writing*. What have you learned about *good writing*, that would enable you to discuss poetry you've been reading in those terms, as good composition?"

Even though the course had set things up for closure, I had to call in the wrecker to untangle things. Only Carol T., a star student, was able intuitively, on her own, to transfer her learning and see that yes indeed, the poems we'd read *did* exhibit most of those traits of "good writing": (1) authentic validity not "Engfish" phoniness; (2) vivid specific detailing; (3) coherent but also dynamic structure, shape; (4) tone, or the writer's voice, quite present; (5) tight economical phrasing, no wordiness; and (6) diction: the just-right words selected. Aside from Carol, the others all floundered. It was a super-slow class, admittedly. In any case, the gambit was clean, the game played right; whatever the students had gotten, they had gotten for themselves--which is education. (Not for years now have I been able to assign such questions as, in effect, "in an essay, repeat what you understand the themes and techniques of these poems are, after reading the textbook and listening to my talk and our discussion. . . ."

But the rote beat goes on; and writing-to-learn seems scarcely started. Am I alone in thinking that the writing-across-the-curriculum movement could soon exceed mere "correct" writing, also mere content-learning, and lead to a rethinking of courses and goals at all levels, toward that very old, but still-rare, aim of education as inquiry: not what, but how; not facts, but thinking. . . .?

NOTES

For some of the specific assignments in their original form, I am indebted to various colleagues along the way (my notes often lack specific credits), but for the concept of careful assignment-design to promote thinking, I am especially grateful for Anne Herrington's article "Writing to Learn: Writing Across the Disciplines," which appeared in *College English*, April 1981, pp. 379-87.

Windyridge Press announces the publication of *Sweet Agony II: A Writing Book of Sorts*, by Gene Olson. The author's primary intent is not to help student writers become professionals, but to pass along those parts of his professional writing experience which can lead students toward a better understanding of the process and help them to cope more cheerfully with its enormous difficulties.. The price of the book is $7.97 plus shipping. ISBN: 0-913366-07-2 Write to: Winyridge Press, PO Box 591, Rogue River, Oregon 97537

WRITING AND THE REAL WORLD

Kent Forrester

As we all know, the world outside our writing classes is full of folly and wickedness. For one thing, it steadfastly refuses to follow practices that go on inside our classrooms.

I'm not even speaking of the gap between classroom writing usage--quaint and olden as it is--and usage in the outside world. There are pretty good reasons for keeping usage inside the classroom a stylized reflection of usage in the outer world. Out there, fragments may be as common as mosquitoes on a summer evening in Wisconsin, but it does seem an inefficient use of class time to try to teach the distinction between acceptable and unacceptable fragments when the student hasn't yet conquered ordinary sentences. Actually, if I could teach what a frag is, I might go on to teach the difference between a good one and a bad one. If I could figure out the difference myself.

But there seem to be no good reasons for the gap between some other matters we commonly deal with in the classroom and the world at large.

For instance, in the world at large a writer is rarely, if ever, given an open-ended writing assignment. Supervisor to employee: "Harry, write an essay on something." Yet we writing teachers often require our students to select and then narrow subjects before they write.

Perhaps we've been influenced by writing handbooks, which insist on including a section called something like "Finding and Narrowing a Subject," filled with lists of subjects to narrow, then narrow further, then narrow even further. Or perhaps this peculiar emphasis on narrowing is due to our own training. We have sometimes been required in graduate school--probably by professors who used conventional writing handbooks--to find our own theses. Indeed, we have become experts at narrowing. If the articles written by English instructors in journals like PMLA and CCC ("Prolegomenon to Pedagogical Stylistics") are indication, we've learned our lesson well. We've learned to narrow subjects down so far that no one is interested in reading about them. Now we insist that others do the same.

In the world outside, narrowed subjects, or theses, grow out of the need to write. Indeed, it's hard to imagine a writing situation--outside of free-lance writing--in which the writer has to come up with and narrow a subject. Reports, letters to supervisors, supervisors' letters to staff, memos, business letters, and what have you--in almost all writing situations, theses come ready made. A person doesn't sit down to write a memo without a reason for writing. Writers who sit down to write a letter of complaint to the local newspaper about the disappearance from the comic page of "The Wizard of Id" need not think about narrowing their thesis. It is indistinguishable from the need to write:

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"Bring back 'The Wizard of Id'!"

There are other gaps equally as wide. I've come to believe--I'm not alone in this, am I?--that we overvalue language playfulness-a quality not in great demand outside the classroom except in the pages of The New Yorker. The reason for our enthusiasm for "freshness" is not hard to find. We need only look, once again, at our own situation. Oh how dreadful it is to read essay after essay made up of dead sentences. Anything that even barely resembles originality--a touch of wit, a little irony, an unusual metaphor--is a refreshing oasis after miles of desiccated sentences. To a man dying of thirst, Kool-Aid probably tastes like wine.

Besides, we English teachers were the kids who enjoyed playing with language and ideas; it's no wonder we generously reward writers who indulge in that same kind of language playfulness.

Unfortunately, in the workaday world into which our students will be entering, wit and playfulness are rarely valued. Writing in the workaday world has a workaday reason for being. Out there they want clear, concise, no-nonsense prose--the kind we want in the functional communications that land on our desk.

I don't mean we should encourage dead writing. The world out there could do with more prose that has a personality behind it--prose that is not afraid to use figures of speech to clarify ideas, is not timid about expressing ideas forcefully and gracefully. But outside our demesne, the cute aside and the oblique metaphor are considered a bit precious.

Besides, our version of what is fresh and original is probably distorted by our situation. What idea or image from a student writer, after all, can surprise us after a few years of reading hundreds of essays a semester? It is unfair to insist on freshness and originality when it takes so much to please us. The poor student comes up with what seems to be a strong and fresh metaphor--"as strong as an ox," perhaps--and we write "cliche" atop it.

Finally, I've begun to wonder if we aren't avoiding our responsibility when we assign so many personal experience essays--which are in as much demand outside the classroom as a poetic metaphor is.

Of course, personal experience essays suit us. For one thing, they are more pleasant to read than papers in which the student has to summarize and comment on the ideas in someone else's essay. Reading "experiential" essays is a little like reading someone's diary. Which of the essays based on the following two writing assignments would you rather read?

1. Discuss a traumatic experience which now seems to have been worth having.

2. Summarize the essay, "Man and the Grunion," and then comment on the logical progression of the author's ideas.

The stack of papers based on the first assignment is going to be full of car wrecks, divorces, losses in Little League baseball, cuts and broken bones, loneliness, and flies unzipped. The essays based on the second assignment aren't going to contain half as much variety. In fact, they're going to resemble one another very closely. Even worse, they'll be full of twisted logic and inaccurate paraphrases that we'll have to untwist and worry over. Not a pleasant task. It's no wonder we assign so many essays based on personal experiences. They're not quite so dreadful to read. I've long had the feeling that the pedogogical justification for "experiential" essays I read about in writing journals is little more than the kind of soothing rationalization that allows us to go on doing something we want to do.

I used to think that almost all writing skills could be learned through the vehicle of experiential essays. I no longer think that. The skills our students are most desperately in need of--handling paraphrases and quotations, constructing logical arguments, using evidence, learning how to write objective prose--are not learned through the personal essay, but through essays that analyse the ideas and techniques that occur in other essays.

Of course, one might say that as long as we are trying to make classroom writing more closely resemble real-world writing, we ought to do away with the essay form and replace it with forms such as memos, letters, and small reports--all of which are more common forms "out there."

But there are pretty good reasons for retaining the essay in the classroom. It is, for instance, a convenient form in length; it suits well the hour we have our students in class. It is also an easily adaptable vehicle for the teaching of almost all writing skills.

But we have probably overemphasized the essay at the expense of other forms, and this overemphasis is no doubt due--once again--to our own backgrounds. The essay is the form _we_ were bred on in our undergraduate years as English majors, in the essays we wrote in graduate school, in the journals and magazines we read. It is the form of choice for the writers of _The New Yorker_, _The New York Review of Books_, _Harper's_, and other magazines read principally by people who graduated from college in the humanities.

I don't want to take my own advice. I'd rather read playful, witty personal essays in which students write about their cats, their pillow fights, their moo cows, their motorcycle accidents, their unzipped flies. I don't want to read reports that summarize and analyze, without wit or subjectivity, the writings of others. But unless I swallow my own bitter pill, the writing world outside the classroom is going to look as curious to my students as the world on the other side of the looking glass looked to Alice. Perhaps even curiouser.

CORRECTIONS PERSONNEL: INDIVIDUALIZING THE WORKSHOP

Eleanor M. Hoffman

Over the past several years, I have done workshops for people in corrections, specifically parole officers and workers at the local juvenile detention facility, adapting, as Russell Rutter suggests, "information-processing methods and paradigms" to "teaching corrections reporting".[1] While Rutter's article provides for the writing teacher a good overview of the need corrections personnel experience for instruction in writing and builds the teacher's confidence that a course can be developed from materials with which the teacher is already familiar, it does not address the need to individualize the workshop for each specific group of corrections personnel.[2]

I propose here to show one teacher's procedure in discovering and meeting the needs of two different corrections audiences. The first is an audience of probation officers required to put together pre-sentence investigation reports (PSI) for offenders, adult or juvenile. The second is an audience of workers in the local juvenile detention facility who are required to write "incident reports" and to keep general daily notes about the behaviour of the facility's residents. In both cases, the audience is experienced in the formats used by the Corrections Department. In both cases, the reports are used either directly or indirectly as part of the evidence integral to the disposition of a case. Each audience, however, sees itself as needing something different.

Determining Wants and Needs

Ways to determine need include 1) pre-workshop interviews with appropriate personnel, such as the in-service supervisor (or other authoritative personnel), and one or more of the persons to be involved in the workshop, and 2) close examination of reports (PSI's, incident reports, other reports) generated by the persons to be served.[3]

The Interview

In the interview, I work from a prepared list of questions to determine as specifically as possible how corrections personnel see the need, what they want. For example, in setting up one workshop I asked the interviewees to describe the writing problems they saw and then to list and describe the changes they wanted workers to make in their writing behavior. A supervisor commented, "They have trouble making sense sometimes." (I inferred sentence problems and possible mechanical problems.) "They go on and on." (I inferred poor or no selection of detail, possible high level of repetition, possible organization problem.) "They are vague." (I inferred jargon, high level of repetition, lack of detail.) A P.O. (probation officer) I interviewed noted,

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and the juvenile center education supervisor commented similarly, "The judge/caseworker doesn't always get a clear picture of why the recommendation is as it is." (I inferred jargon, lack of selected detail, possible word choice problem, a misunderstanding of the difference between giving detail and selecting detail, some confusions about objectivity.) Two juvenile center workers commented: "Out here at the Juvenile Center, we sometimes have difficulty agreeing on the emerging picture of the resident." (I inferred objectivity problems, a need to work on denotation, connotation; a need for group work towards a balanced interpretation of incidents; a need to work toward a common vocabulary for describing incidents.) In fact, there was so much agreement on the relevance of this problem that I eventually focused a whole workshop on it. A P.O. supervisor made sure I understood that "the reports have to be to the judge XX hours before the hearing, and we are usually rushing to get them there." (I inferred that the need to write under pressure is a given, that officers want efficiency in the writing process, that there is no time for other than minimal revision--spelling, word change, punctuation.) And another P.O. interviewed remarked, "The judge looks more favorably on the disposition suggested by the report if all the reports and materials seem to point in one direction." (I inferred that the officers felt they were well qualified to suggest case disposition, that they cared about the people they served, that they strongly felt the judge should have good reason for rejecting any recommendations, that they believed strongly their reports served a persuasive function as well as reporting function.)

To summarize, the workshop instructor needs to interview from a prepared list of questions, questions that encourage the interviewees to talk at length and in detail about what they see as needs and as outcomes. The information elicited suggests the focus for the workshop and the instructional time needed to produce the desired outcomes. The interview also assures both teacher and hiring agency that the workshop is not canned but planned. And if one or more of the participants is present at the interview, the instructor can better predict the nature of the audience.

The Writing Samples

The writing samples provide a way to validate the information gathered in the interview and enable the instructor to tailor the workshop to meet specific weaknesses. For example, my interview led me to suspect mechanical weaknesses in the P.O.'s prose. Although there were specific problems common to much of the P.O. prose, mechanical difficulties were not among them. My initial inference was not validated.

The writing sample analysis allowed me to avoid unnecessary lessons, but taught me the flavor of the PSI and the incident report, allowed me to observe the problems in the prose and to address specific difficulties with specific solutions. Most important, the samples allowed me to work from the writers' strengths rather than from their weaknesses. Some examples will help illustrate each point.

First, I caught the flavor of the PSI and the incident report. The PSI is a final, finished document; the incident report is one of many small documents which have a bearing on the final report written for the individual. But both are read and used to make decisions about persons. The PSI is formal, structured according to a canned format, and usually built as much from second-hand materials (police report, family interview, case history, etc.) as it is from first hand knowledge of the offender. The incident report is informal, a casual document resulting from first hand observation of the resident in action.

Second, I observed specific problems in the prose. I noticed after reading several reports that certain wordings recurred frequently, confirming my suspicions of jargon and irrelevant or too highly generalized representation of detail. It was difficult to determine real differences among people in the PSI's. Similarly, in the incident reports, it was difficult at times to determine "the real me" of the resident. This confirmed the need to make workshoppers aware of their vocabulary choices and to practice selecting and presenting detail objectively. There was also a tendency to generalize the behavior being reported rather than to report the behavior specifically, which confirmed my hypothesis of high level rather than low level detail, even failure to see what was not significant. This was more common in the incident reports than in the PSI's. I also began to wonder whether the workers at the juvenile center had a shared vocabulary for discriminating among behaviors accurately, again confirming the need for vocabulary work and for group agreement upon the behaviors to be represented by the vocabulary. Perhaps, too, they confused generalization with brevity.

Further, in the PSI prose I noticed the predominance of one particular sentence structure--reportorial narrative--(subject + verb + that clause, which explains and contains the import of the statement). I also discovered that when an officer violated this sentence structure (which is, after all, highly useful in prose that reports secondhand what was said and done and believed by another), incoherences, particularly misplaced modifiers, cropped up. As long as the officer stayed with the reportorial narrative, the prose read well, was clear, and was, for the most part, correct. Reportorial narrative was a minor factor in the direct reporting of the incidents at the juvenile center.

Third, I was able to address specific difficulties with specific solutions.

For the P.O. Workshop

Rather than teach the PSI which workshoppers had been writing for years and knew the format of better than I could ever hope to know it, I elected to

1. Teach the reportorial narrative sentence structure in order to make the officers conscious of it and of its potential as a way out of a problem sentence.

2. Spend time comparing parts of reports in order to point out how difficult it was to get a sense of the offender.

3. Write in class sections of reports, using more specific language and detail, without increasing the time needed to produce the report.

4. Elicit from the officers devices they could share about organizing material (one officer had developed a dictation format which enabled the secretary to type across the page rather than down the page in columnar fashion). Sharing this idea lightened the secretary's problems with dictated prose considerably.

These interventions allowed me to work from the writer's strengths: their knowledge of the PSI format, their useful sentence structures, their need for appropriate detail, and their attempts to suit materials to the dictation mode of delivery to the secretary. Using their strengths to improve their weaknesses also encouraged a positive classroom attitude and assured them that they were indeed proficient and could easily become more proficient by better using what they already knew. This also alleviated their fears that this workshop would increase the writing burden rather than lessen it.

For the Juvenile Center workshop

The interviews and writing samples led me to prepare for this group a workshop which, on the surface, did not feature writing at all. I focused on observing and reporting observation; I begged, borrowed, and constructed materials which would

1. Require the group to recognize their failure to observe carefully and to report observations in language a reader can interpret accurately. (I used short films intended for teacher training that featured classroom incidents because I could find no locally available corrections material.)

2. Encourage oral reading and comparison of people's renditions of an incident. Particular attention was given to pointing out judgmental language. (At times we would rerun the film to determine whether a judgment could/should be made; and which was the more accurate judgment.) This led to lots of in-group discussion and to in-group planning to continue cooperative discussion.

3. Make it possible to gather and discuss a vocabulary which would describe the range of behaviors being reported. I put together a list of behavior-descriptive words. Participants discussed what the various words meant to them and the kind of details certain words elicited. The group then saw the necessity for agreeing somewhat on the meanings of words commonly used and for supplying detail as specific as possible. They saw themselves as the greatest contributors to their misunderstandings and made the decision to remedy this.

Again, I worked from the strengths the personnel already possessed. They knew what sorts of incidents were to be reported, the format for these reports, and the reasons for accurate, well-detailed, complete yet brief reports. They were prepared, then, to see the necessity for a common vocabulary of general terms plus specific supporting detail in each report. Moreover, they were prepared to understand that mutual cooperation provided the only route to real improvement. Once they realized that what they were doing in the workshop was what they had been telling themselves and me they needed to do, they were anxious to work together to make changes in their ways of observing and reporting those observations.

In conclusion, I strongly recommend that composition persons working with corrections personnel, or any such group of experienced personnel, find out prior to constructing workshops what it is these people want and need. Interviews with supervisory personnel and with participants, and analyses of the writing done are two ways of gathering this data. The resulting workshop, designed with the audience in mind, should facilitate more lasting change in the workshoppers. Specifically tailoring a workshop to a group is more work for the presenter than a canned workshop which does what the presenter believes needs to be done. But Corrections personnel are busy people. They have little time to waste, at least in this state and county. They are also a difficult audience, experienced in spotting superfluous detail or pretentiousness and in separating what makes sense from what does not. I remember facing the group of 12 P.O.'s the first day of my first workshop. I felt distinctly uncomfortable, as though I had to prove that I had something to offer or they would not come back after the break. Within 30 minutes, I knew they would stay, and I knew we could work successfully together. I was glad I had done my homework and could offer them what they wanted, something other than another try at the PSI.

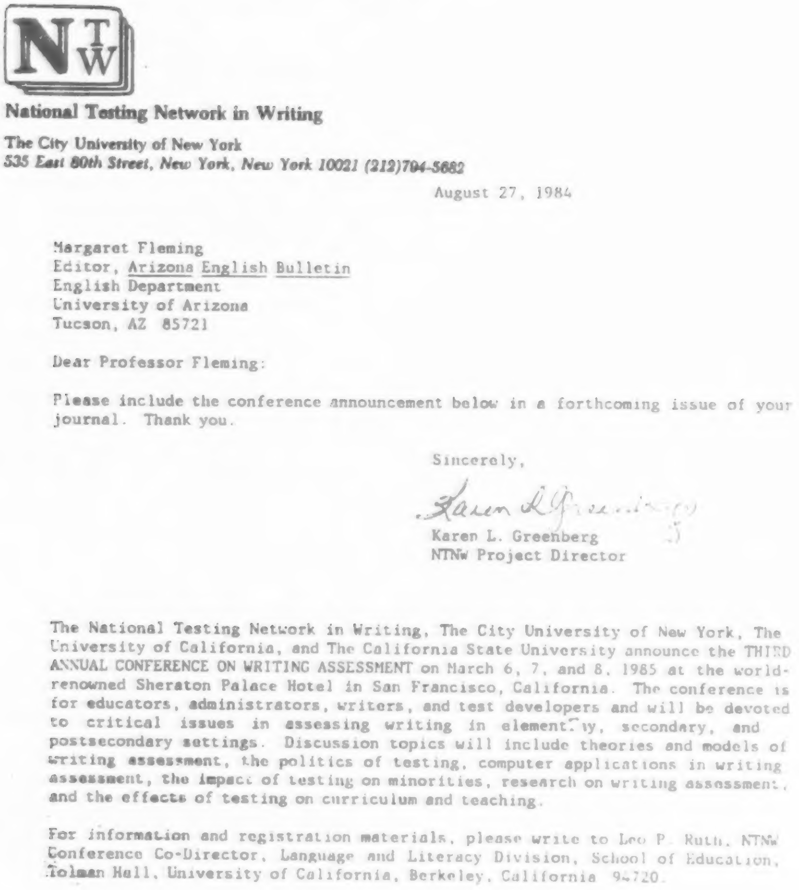
NOTES

[1] Russell Rutter, "Teaching Writing to Probation Officers: Problems, Methods, and Resources," <u>College Composition and Communication</u>, 33 (October 1982), 294.

[2] None of the actual materials are included here because I wanted to concentrate on the need to find out what corrections personnel want and need. I do have materials and will happily share them with others, particularly with others who have done workshops with corrections people and might have materials to share with me.

[3] Although this material is confidential, two means exist for accessing valid writing samples. One is to obtain copies of actual reports which have been edited to protect the person(s) involved. For example, all names, dates, locations may be obliterated or replaced with false data. A second method is to ask corrections workers to construct a report from a fictitious case. A case may be provided or each worker may construct a `model' case to work from. I have found the first option to be

more viable because of the constraints on these persons' time. Most probation officers and juvenile center workers already have too much to do. Frequently, one reason for requesting a corrections reporting workshop is to further efficiency.



NTW

National Testing Network in Writing

The City University of New York
535 East 80th Street, New York, New York 10021 (212)794-5682

August 27, 1984

Margaret Fleming
Editor, Arizona English Bulletin
English Department
University of Arizona
Tucson, AZ 85721

Dear Professor Fleming:

Please include the conference announcement below in a forthcoming issue of your journal. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Karen L. Greenberg
NTNW Project Director

The National Testing Network in Writing, The City University of New York, The University of California, and The California State University announce the THIRD ANNUAL CONFERENCE ON WRITING ASSESSMENT on March 6, 7, and 8, 1985 at the world-renowned Sheraton Palace Hotel in San Francisco, California. The conference is for educators, administrators, writers, and test developers and will be devoted to critical issues in assessing writing in elementary, secondary, and postsecondary settings. Discussion topics will include theories and models of writing assessment, the politics of testing, computer applications in writing assessment, the impact of testing on minorities, research on writing assessment, and the effects of testing on curriculum and teaching.

For information and registration materials, please write to Leo P. Ruth, NTNW Conference Co-Director, Language and Literacy Division, School of Education, Tolman Hall, University of California, Berkeley, California 94720.

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MYTH OR REALITY: THE VALUE OF ENGLISH IN THE WORKING WORLD

Charles R. Duke and Ruth Ann Futrell

Probably few classroom teachers have not had students ask, "Why do we have to learn this? We're never going to use it outside of school." And probably nowhere does that question occur more often than in English classes as students receive another grammar drill, another writing or reading assignment. As teachers we have usually responded to the question with a stock answer: "Because this will help you in the real world; you need these skills to get ahead." Although we may have said this many times, the looks of disbelief on students' faces, the stories they tell of uncles and cousins--drop-outs from school who make more money than we do--of friends who work steadily but never read a book or write a letter suggest that our admonitions fail to convince. That leaves us with the question of whether people who are products of the same educational system really share these students' feelings and perceptions.

That question surfaces again outside the classroom when we attend budget hearings and PTA meetings where we hear taxpayers arguing against increasing the budget to add another English teacher, expand the library holdings, or buy more paper; these are the same people who may approve, without a murmur, a special expenditure to pay for the band's trip to New York for the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade.

The question never seems to go away. Recent reports by the Carnegie Commission and the National Commission on Excellence in Education have called for greater emphasis upon academic excellence and skills. These reports have been developed by individuals in corporate, academic, and political offices without benefit, apparently, of direct testimony from the people most directly involved in supporting reform--the graduates and the non-graduates of the system. Yet the reports call for citizens to allocate more money for the schools and to insist upon greater academic excellence. But how do those people really feel about their education?

Because we don't like to leave questions unanswered, we decided to seek an answer. The best way to do this, we thought, was to go to the people who had already tested the value of their educational experiences in the working world. However, because

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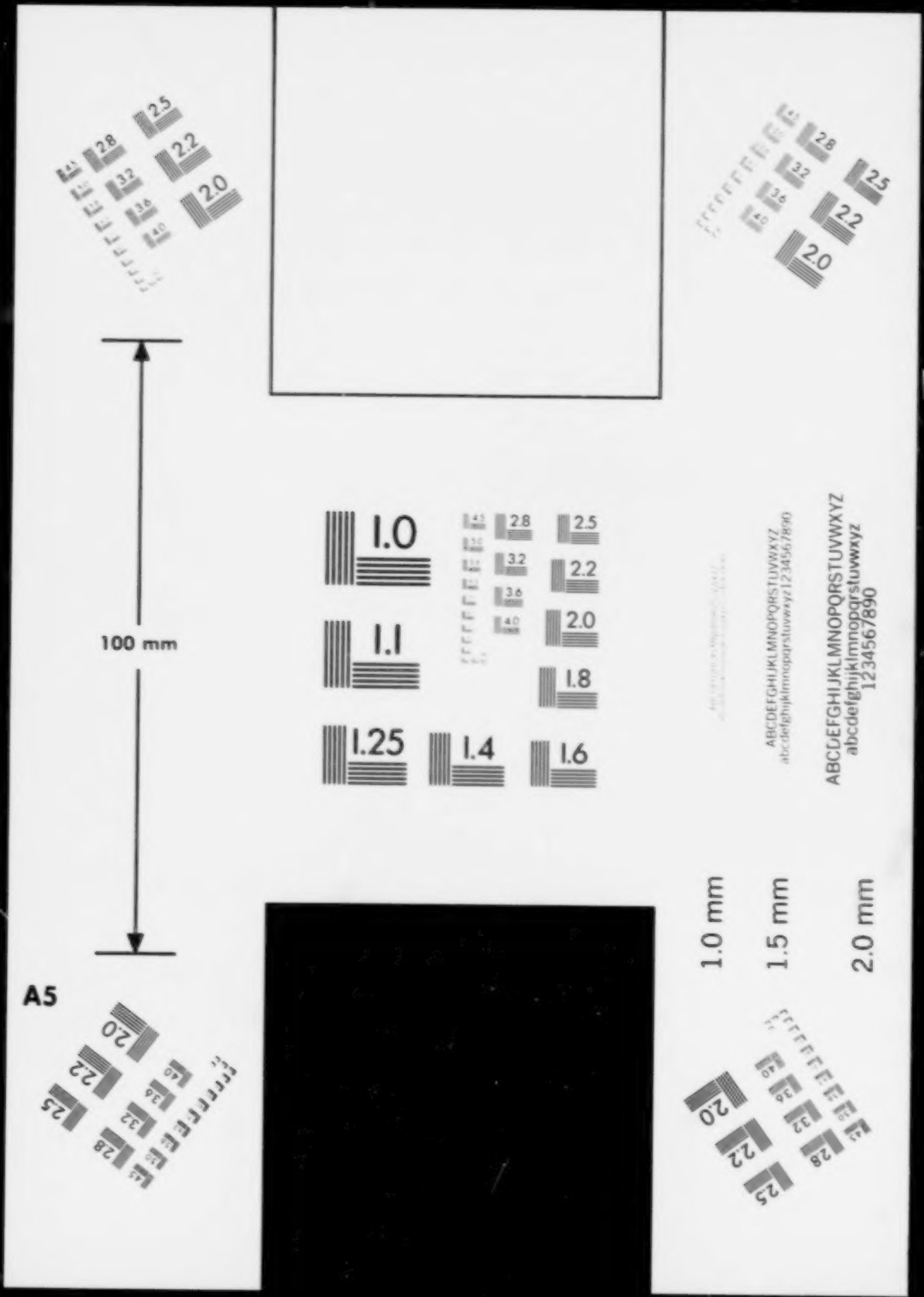
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our primary interest lies with English, we focused on discovering how people felt about what had happened to them in their English classes and what, if any, carry-over it had to their everyday lives.

We felt our region would be ideal as a sounding board because the U.S. Department of Agriculture indicates that of about 3,000 counties in the United States, 2,649 of them are defined as non-metropolitan and only 26 percent of the total U.S. population lives outside such areas. Our sampling was not huge, our methods not scientific, but we found among the population of one rural county in western Kentucky a number of people, probably not unlike many others in various parts of the country, who had some pronounced opinions about the value of their classroom experiences with English.

This county, for its economic base, draws upon farming, some small manufacturing, some tourism, a regional university, and a thriving cottage industry in refurbishing used cars from all over the country. Most of the people in the region have lived there all their lives, attended local schools, and have found some type of work in the region. According to the 1980 census for this one county, there were 11,076 non-agricultural employable men and women; approximately 1,400-1,500 people in the county earn at least $5,000 yearly from farming, mostly soybeans, corn, and tobacco, but these individuals are primarily part-time farmers. Between 700 to 800 people farm full-time with incomes over $10,000. Fisher-Price, a manufacturer of children's toys, maintains a large plant and during good economic times employs about 830 people in the molding and assembly sections of its facility. No one knows for certain how many people are employed in the automobile occupations because so many of these are small, private "businesses" which don't require a license and aren't even listed as businesses. However, if a person drives along almost any road in the county, an amazing number of garages and sheds behind homes will contain one or two cars in various stages of being "refreshed": engines steam-cleaned, exteriors and interiors touched-up--whatever it takes to make a used car look as though it would be worth a much higher price than in its original state.

Most of our interviews were with people in the three principal occupational fields--farming, manufacturing, and auto clean-up--since they seemed to be fields not commonly looked at when career studies, particularly those related to English occur. We also sought to talk with people who were not necessarily managers or the typical white collar employees. With these interviews, we wanted to obtain information about what, if any, English skills the people used in their everyday working lives and to what extent "school English" prepared them for the lives they found themselves leading. As we visited these people in their homes and at their jobs, they displayed a refreshing willingness to talk about their schooling. As a result, we decided to let them simply tell us whatever was on their minds. Space does not permit us to provide complete transcripts of the conversations; instead, we have selected representative excerpts to suggest the range of response. The names of the people interviewed have been changed but their comments have not been edited except for space purposes.

FARMING

Mike

Twenty-two-year-old county native; inherited the land on which he farms and the house where he and his wife live. Mike's mother died of cancer when he was eight; his father died of the same disease just four years ago. Mike is one of the fortunate farmers in the area who do not owe money on land or machinery. He did not receive his high school diploma because he failed a semester of English in his senior year.

"English is the only subject that I took in high school which I never use. I hated it; it was stupid; it was a waste of time. I didn't see any use for it then, and I don't see any use for it now.

"Yes, we take some farm magazines like the *Progressive Farmer* and the *Farm Journal*, but I don't know why. If I ever pick them up, I just thumb through to look at the pictures of new trucks and farm equipment. I never read anything.

"I don't even write checks. I don't write anything. Millie [his wife] does all that. Millie likes to read. She'll lay over on the couch and read a book from start to finish. It even makes me mad to see her read. I don't know why, but it just really makes me mad. It isn't that she doesn't do her work and should be doing something else. It just makes me mad."

Timmy

Thirty-six-year-old Vietnam veteran who lost an eye in the war; native of the county. He farms family land but had to "buy out" a number of relatives to acquire his grandparents' old house and hillside land. He raises corn, soybeans, hogs, and tobacco. He has his master's degree in agricultural education from the local university.

"Oh--English--wow--that was a few years back. Let's see...I always liked reading and parts of sentences. I enjoy reading today. I read the newspaper and all the farm publications, outdoor magazines like *Hunter*, *Field and Stream*, and *Sports Afield*. That's my hobby. My wife doesn't like me to read novels. She says I won't talk to her or do anything else until the book is finished. I work in a few in the winter after the 'baccer's stripped, anyway.

"You know, James [his son] is learning to read in first grade now. He's so excited. Tracy [wife] is too because now he can read to Mike Bob [baby] and we won't have to.

"I have to read labels on all the chemicals like Treflan and Round-up and figure out what they say. My chemistry and math really are as important as my English there, though, in figuring out amounts for different sized fields. The seed corn and soybean varieties differ in size so much that I have to read the tags on them for number per bushel. The math is more important there, again, as I have to figure out how many bushels I'll need to plant 40 acres.

"I never could spell. I can't spell now. I guess I just memorized words for the tests and then forgot them. I don't know who was at fault there. My creativity was `zippo!' All I could ever write on a theme was an opening, a body, and a closing. My style never changed. I'd always get my papers back with the same comments and same grade. I had no creativity. I can't write now--even a good letter; I don't enjoy it.

"Oh, let me tell you something that happened last summer at a family reunion in Memphis. A couple of my cousins were talking above my head, they thought. They were using big words--one was a company executive of some sort and the other a pilot. They were ignoring me, thinking I couldn't understand or keep up with them. There was something they couldn't remember or figure out. I explained it all to them and really put them down. I enjoy putting people down who act well-educated. I think it's better to be on the level of the people you're around and not show off your education, but I love to put people down who act so smart, and I'm really good at it."

Vaughn

Vaughn, 37, moved to the county 17 years ago. He has a master's degree from the local university. He farms his father's 260 acre estate, his own 40 acres, and 27 acres he rents, raising corn, soybeans, and tobacco. Because farm prices are so variable, he has diversified, buying rental property, a two-bay garage, a two-bay body shop, and grain storage bins. He is also in the Army reserves.

"English definitely has its purpose but it's grossly overrated. The average person does not need four years of high school English and two years of college English. People outside the field of education need to be able to communicate orally and in writing, but two semesters of some required idiocy like ancient lit's not going to help a nuclear physicist. He's be better off taking two more courses in his field.

"English was hammered in and beaten in when I was in school. If schools have this English requirement and people still can't communicate and write, then it's the fault of the system. In my circle, it does not pay to be over-educated. It makes people leery of you. You have to be something of a hick to get by in this redneck world.

"I read all the time--books, magazines, *The Wall Street Journal*. I do some writing when I have to. I wrote some resolutions for the Farm Bureau board last October. I use my English skills more when I'm a `warrior.' That's all I did in D.C. The Army has its own style of writing. It's full of Army anachronisms and superfluous words. They just go on and on and say nothing, using reams and reams of paper to fill up file cabinets so they can look impressive. I can write that stuff all day long. On my last O.E.R. (Officer Efficiency Report), I was rated `outstanding, an exceptional individual with great skills compounded by devotion above and beyond the call of duty!' I write brilliantly.

"I think in high school they should give a minimum competency test--give it early enough, maybe early junior year--so kids will have time to work on things they're weak on before they take it over. They should take a couple quarters of English in college; then it should be forgotten except for educators in the schools. They should all write and speak correctly."

MANUFACTURING

We interviewed a number of people at the Fisher-Price plant, trying to obtain as much of a cross-section of employees below the managerial level as possible.

Marti

A 32-year-old native of the county, she has worked at Fisher-Price for seven years, assembling toys on one of the lines. She is a high school graduate.

"There ain't nothin' I do that Chris [her 10-year-old son] or Darby couldn't do--or Jon could do. There ain't nothin' I learned in school I even use at work. Some days I put marbles in a bear rattle all day. Some days I use a machine. You gotta be quick and good with your hands to meet production.

"I don't use nothin' I learned in English. I don't never write nothin'. I might read a book in the summer when I'm layin' out in the sun, but it's easier to listen to the radio. I don't care nothin' about reading, really. Bobby [her husband] and Chris read all the time but I can't stand that ole mess. I don't never look at a magazine--don't take any or the paper."

Kate

She was born and raised in a small town in Illinois. Her husband is a native of the county. Kate has worked during high employment times at Fisher-Price for four years.

"When somebody mentions English, I think of diagramming sentences and talkin' right. Everybody's always correctin' me cuz I say 'layin' out in the sun.' Now I'm self-conscious about it so I say 'lyin' out in the sun,' but that sounds stupid or like I'm tryin' to act smart, so I don't know what to say. Usually, by the time I think about it all, it's 'done got out' and it's too late.

"The only time I ever used English at work is just when we talked to each other. I never type or need to use right English at work. I could just sit there and not never say a word.

"I hate to write. I don't even write to Mom and Dad. I never learned to do it right. I guess that's why I hate to write letters; I don't know how to use paragraphs right. If I'd studied more, I might like to write. I keep tellin' Stacy [eighth-grade daughter] to really study her English. It's really important. Scott [ninth-grade son] hates his. He's waitin' for me to help him with his algebra now. He says he don't know how he'll ever use those X's and Y's in real life.

"I hate to read. I can't concentrate. Even if I read something in a magazine, I can't concentrate and skip over parts. For years, I'd even take the nursery or the two-three-year-old's class rather than to have Larry [the teacher] call on me to answer a question in class. I couldn't even concentrate long enough to read the lesson. Maybe I should have studied more."

Roseann

A native of the county and a mother of three, she has worked long enough at Fisher-Price to avoid the lay-off. She is a materials handler.

"I guess if you call writing down lots of numbers using what I learned in English, then I use it. What I really use is my math. I'm responsible for keeping everyone on my line supplied with all the parts they need. Of course I have to keep a record of this. Then I count full boxes of finished toys, put so many on a skid. Of course there are more turtle rattles in a box than musical mobiles, so I have to keep all that straight in my multiplication. Sometimes, at the end of a shift, we have partial boxes, so I count them separately. Mainly, I just use English when I'm talkin' and we're talking all the time out there. I know I don't talk right, but it doesn't matter out there."

Deborah

She is a high school graduate and native of the county, working at Fisher-Price since it opened in 1973. She is president of the young women's group at her church, leader of the pre-teen group at church, and involved with school activities of her two children.

"I loved school--especially English. I loved to read and write and diagram sentences. Harold [husband] and I both had the chance to go on to college, but we were young and just got married. Sometimes I wish I had gone on, but I don't think it would have helped me with the job I have now, and I love my work.

"I don't work out on the line; I'm in Q.C.--that's quality control. We check parts as well as finished products and packaged toys. They all have to meet certain standards. Then we have to write up a bunch of reports. I do lots of paper work, and my high school English really helps. Some of my reports have been sent to the main office in New York.

"You know, I started out on the lines just like everyone else. When certain jobs come open, they're posted on the bulletin board, and you 'bid' for them, according to your qualifications. I think my high school English is what helped me get this job. I make nearly twice as much money as I would on the line. It's never boring, either, like the lines.

"I don't have time to read novels or much at home. If I start a book, that's all I want to do. I read my Bible every day and my lessons for church, but that's all I have time for. Kim and Chris, and Harold [children and husband]) all like to read. Maybe someday I'll go back to school."

Nita

Twenty-eight years old, she is a staff secretary at Fisher-Price and a native of the area.

"English is my work! All day every day! I need to know proper usage of verbs, singular and plural usage, and agreement. Correct spelling is very important. I'm constantly using spelling, especially with sound-alike words like accept-except, affect-effect, lots of those. Subjects and verbs need to agree. I get the written information and have to come up with the proper format. The way it looks is important. Some information is better set-up in charts, others need wide margins or narrow margins. I write everything from memos to formal reports for the main office and other branch offices.

"My literature is of no value. I never refer to Silas in any of my reports. I have no time to read. At work I'm too busy, and at home I have my family and plenty to do.

"My bosses must have never heard of punctuation. They don't punctuate at all. One man puts 3,000 commas in his sentences. By the time I take all of them out, I don't have any idea where his sentences begin and end.

"I loved English in high school. I guess it's 50-50 in importance with my business courses. My typing wouldn't do me much good if I didn't know the English. I really use the English to communicate with the public."

AUTO CLEAN-UP

Hal

He is 35-40 years old, and a salaried employee at his brother's business. Hal is a native of the area. His brother has been a big name in the car business for many years.

"It's impossible to say how many shops there are in the county or how many people are employed in the car business. You can't separate many of the different aspects as even the new car dealerships have their own body shops and clean-up shops. Parker Ford and Taylor Motors do most of their own work. Well, I don't think they do upholstery work or put on new tops. There are a couple of top shops around that just put on new vinyl tops.

"There are people you'd connect with the auto industry in the area like the salvage yards--Murray Auto Salvage and Key Auto Salvage. If they don't have the used parts we want, they'll put it out on the wire--sort of like a hot line--and get it in within two or three days.

"Then there are the haulers. Some big businesses own their own haul-aways and hire drivers full-time to go to Chicago and pick up cars for us. Some people own their own haul-aways, and that's all they do.

"Then there are people that just deal in tires. Tires is a big business in the area--new and used tires both. But probably the biggest indication as to the volume of car business in this area is the amount of paint sold. There are four or five places locally that sell paint for cars--D. & W.'s-- it's franchised; it's big all over. Then there are Motor Parts and Bearings, Murray Auto Parts, and Morgan's. There are other places like Murray Home and Auto that do a big volume of business associated in several ways with the auto industry here. It's been especially important since Tappan left Murray.

"Now, as to how my English helps me or what skills I use, I'd have to think a minute. Your schooling helps you no matter what. My English courses help me in dealing with people. My job is almost entirely in communicating with people. I guess you'd call me the manager here. I run the business for my brother. I do about everything but go out on the road. That was part of the deal--that I don't leave town.

"I don't have to do any writing. We have secretaries and bookkeepers to do all that. I guess mainly my high-school English has just given me a basis to talk with people. We have one boy here who graduated from the vocational school last year. I can tell his schooling helped him, and I think it would naturally help anybody."

Donnie

He has lived in the county for 11 years now. He has worked for several car dealers in the area, but now manages and runs a two-bay garage behind his house.

Donnie, in his early 40's, had a motor "torn down" the day we stopped by his shop. A NAPA toboggan perched on top of his head, one remaining tooth showing, he grinned and said, "Hi, Guys!"

"Earnestine [wife] uses English a lot more than I do. She does all the bills and book work. I don't read anything. I've just learned by years of doin' it. You know what really makes Earnestine mad is all those damn government forms she has to fill out. It's bad enough we have to pay everything we make in taxes let alone they change those forms every few months. She just does the best she can. We know they'll let us know if we don't send 'em enough money. Hey, you remember back a couple years ago they kept sending us the forms to fill out for our employees? I bet she sent them back a half dozen times. Those idiots just kept on sending them. They know we don't have any employees here but me. Oh, now what'd you ask me?

"Oh, English. Well, I had to quit school and help out at home so my schoolin's been by do and learn. Clayton [his son] took that auto body course out at the vocational school, but I think he already knew most of it from working with me. Maybe if they'd include a few words like micrometers and minimicrometers it might help. I can look at a metric wrench and tell if its a 4mm or a 6mm, but it was hard at first. Just maybe teach 'em more of the metric system. That's all I can think of."

Leo

A 42-year-old county native, he owns his own clean-up shop and hires one other man to help him.

"Yeah, I use my English a lot--especially reading the labels on the paint cans. I can't afford to waste paint at $8.00-$9.00 a quart. I also talk to a lot of people every day, but I don't talk too good.

"Reading? I've always liked to read. I read newspapers, books, magazines. I like to hunt and fish so I read sporting magazines. I read magazines in my field, too, as they're always coming out with tools with new names and materials with new names. I think your education's important, and even though I griped about English like all the other boys, I can say it's helped me a lot."

NURSING

Francine

She is from another county but is living in this county because of her husband's occupation--a Baptist preacher. She is 28 and earned her nursing degree after her two children started school.

"Communication--both verbal and written--is the most important aspect of my job. If you don't know proper speech, it's definitely a barrier. You are very handicapped if you can't tell what a patient is trying to tell you and in turn can't tell the doctor. I'm sure you've heard of therapeutic communications in some of your psychology courses. I have to question and suggest to the patients to help them say what I need to know. I must be sure because I'm dealing with human lives.

"It really makes me mad when I can't read what a doctor has written. Good penmanship is even important. The doctors may get tired of me calling them when I can't read their writing, but they'll either have to put up with me or write more clearly.

"If a nurse doesn't know proper speech, it really creates a barrier. It's very distracting for her to use bad English. It puts an ignorance quotient on you, destroying patients' trust in you.

"I want what I write to be clear and concise. I'm very descriptive when writing on patients' charts. Spelling--exact spelling--and a working vocabulary are also very important.

"I had an outstanding high-school English teacher. She constantly corrected all aspects of our speaking and writing, even down to our penmanship. I'm thankful she was so strict. We did frequent comprehension stretching exercises which really helped my ability to read on a college level. There was a great deal of information I had to absorb the first time I read it. Yes, English skills are definitely essential and important to my job."

RELIGION

Donnie

Brother Donnie, Francine's husband, is 32 and also a native of another county but now resides in this county. He is working on his master's degree in theology, spending all day every Monday in Jackson, Tennessee. He has organized and headed three missionary teams to Guatamala as well as being elected to various offices within the local ministerial association.

"Unlike Francine, I don't worry much about written communication; mine's mainly spoken. Lots of times, when I meet people, the first ten words out of my mouth determine the kind of impression I make. I didn't do well in high-school English; I didn't like it. Consequently, I've really had to work on my use of verbal skills. I have taken several speech courses. I practice speaking in front of a mirror and often tape my sermons so I can listen to them. I've quit using 'ain't' almost altogether, but still have trouble with 'we was' and 'he don't' type things.

"I read volumes and volumes of books, magazines, everything.

I took a speed reading course that really helped. I love to read, I'm always looking for new ideas and examples to use in my sermons.

"Each course I've taken at Jackson has required at least one long term paper. That's when I wish I'd worked a little harder in high-school English. I have Francine help me with the grammar and punctuation as she types them. I'm just glad I don't have to speak in semi-colons, colons, and commas!"

LAW ENFORCEMENT AND COSMETIC SALES

Tricia

At 32 she is a county native and has worked as a school secretary, bank teller, deputy sheriff, and a Mary Kay beauty consultant. When she was 25, she had a rather serious facial stroke.

"I quit after 11 months. Not only did I not want my house burned down or my family threatened, I couldn't stand the negative approach in the law enforcement. You don't say, 'Would you please have a seat?' You say, 'Sit down over there!' You never say 'please' or 'thank you.' They really jumped all over me when I'd say, 'Hi! How are ya? Would you please follow me so we can take your fingerprints?' You just have to be negative--authoritative, I guess is the word.

"Then, too, there was all the paper work in the office. It was the same thing over and over. It didn't require any skill once you knew what you were doing. I just didn't like it. About all it did was to give me a chance to use my foul English--words that are not very useful in common life.

"Communicating with people effectively is important to selling. I don't walk in here and say, 'Whattaya need?' or 'Ya don't need any Mary Kay this month, do ya?' Rather I might say, 'We have a 10 percent off savings this month. I've noticed our new scent is effective for you,' or something like that, something positive. At conventions we have training sessions on using our voices and vocabulary effectively as well as head and hand movements--body language.

"More important to me, though, is knowing definitions of words. Even though I liked playing ball better than studying, I'm glad Mrs. Overby drilled us in vocabulary. Since my stroke, there are a lot of words I can't pronounce. I have to use a simpler word now whereas I used to be able to use longer words. For example, if I concentrate for a long time, I can say 'technique' but when I'm giving a beauty show, I can't stop and think until I can say 'technique' so I'll say 'method' instead. Or, when doing a make-up demonstration in front of 500 people I'll say 'apply your blush' instead of using the word 'applications.'

"I'm really strict with my kids when it comes to their English in school because I know how important it is to me. I wished I'd studied a little harder."

* * * * * * * * *

When we examined the results of the interviews, we found widely varying marks on the report cards for classroom English. A number of the people with whom we talked revealed a lingering insecurity about their control and use of English. That feeling surfaced in resentful statements about others who spoke or read more fluently; however, a number of these same individuals were thankful that they had friends or relatives willing to help them meet the responsibility for using English skills in work situations. Several times we encountered people's sensitivity to levels of usage and an awareness that the most appropriate language may be that which calls the least attention to itself in any given situation. For some individuals, the switching of linguistic registers was easy--for others, a frightening impossibility.

Although people were willing to talk about language, their comments on reading occurred less often. We were encouraged by the range of reading some people revealed, even though most of it was work related, but we were disturbed by how few individuals seem to remember with any clarity or favor the reading that they presumably had done in the English classroom. A few people mentioned using their leisure time to read novels, but, in general, the classics of literature do not appear to have had a substantial influence on people's lives in this rural region.

As teachers we could be discouraged by all this. With the exception of people in the more traditional white collar occupations, the overall impact of classroom English on the average worker appears limited. However, we did encounter one bright spot. With startling frequency, we encountered people who indicated that they were trying to impress upon younger people the importance of language skills for the working world. We can only hope that encouragement continues and that these adults will support the efforts of the schools in the area to help students learn the value of the English they speak, write, and read.

As we have indicated, our sampling was not large nor were our methods scientific. Nevertheless, we believe that English teachers everywhere would do well to conduct similar surveys to become more familiar with the public's assessments of their experiences in the English classroom. Some of these people could become valuable allies in the effort to help students understand the significance of their study. If we do not remain in touch with the public, particularly the types of people encountered in this survey, we run the risk of developing a real credibility gap between the world of the classroom and the world of work. There's a powerful constituency out there, a population who pay taxes, who make decisions about budget priorities, and who carry with them definite memories related to English. They ask for real value for their money, not merely the perpetuation of myths about the value of English. They will be the ones, not we, who will decide whether the present call for academic excellence is worth the price.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

One of the most successful assignments I and several of my colleagues have given recently is the letter to the editor. In giving this assignment I never specify which editor or what topic a student should write on--perhaps I'm still drawing on Macrorie's notion that people write best when internally motivated, for then their language becomes sharp, clear, more pointed, and more personal as they become involved in the situation they write about.

In order to write a letter to the editor of a newspaper or a magazine, people have to be concerned about an issue, incident, or person. It's not enough just to "spout off"; one has to communicate effectively whatever emotion he or she may be experiencing. Opinion can't be merely sprayed over a page, but arguments must be carefully structured. To be taken seriously, the letter must use language effectively. A recent "Shoe" cartoon by Jeff McNally illustrates this point. In a series of three frames, Shoe, the editor of a tree- top newspaper, sits down at his new word processor and begins typing out tomorrow's editorial: "Once again this newspaper views with alarm the . . ." when he is interrupted by a huge "BLIP!!" "Hey!! What happened?" he yells, "My editorial was erased!!" To which the computer answers: "Once again this computer views with alarm your tired shop worn cliches."

Last year as I meandered down the usually barren corridor between my office and the water fountain I grew increasingly delighted with the original non-cliche writings appearing on my colleagues' office doors as they tacked up newspaper or magazine publication of their students' letters to the editor. One truly memorable clipping featured two students from the same class arguing opposite sides of whether Pine Knob should be granted a liquor license or not. Both letters used evidence convincingly, both argued well, and both were prominently featured accompanied by a photograph of Pine Knob picnickers.

In assigning a letter to the editor, I give a few ground rules, such as these: I will grade all work including letters to the editor, but those students who successfully publish a letter will automatically receive an additional "A." Part of the fun of this assignment for me is that over a four to six week period, published letters dribble in about two or three a week, as they begin to appear in papers and magazines. One student triumphantly handed in her lead editorial letter from The Detroit Free Press! Besides the Detroit papers, students discover that their local hometown or county-based papers are always on the lookout for well written letters. Several of my students, for example, published in The Macomb Daily and The Oakland Press. Subjects of the student letters ranged from the predictable: "Buy American and Save Jobs" to the unpopular: "Robots Can Be Good For Industry--and Jobs"; from the political: "Should Government Help the Poor?" to the practical: "Stray Dogs a Problem." Of course, none of these titles appeared on their original letters--all were invented by whoever composed the editorial page--many students were surprised and delighted by their headlines. Some found their

letters illustrated with cartoons or photographs, which also gave them the feeling they were being taken seriously.

Donald E. Morse, Oakland University, Oakland, Michigan. Reprinted from an article in the Michigan English Teacher, ed. John Beard, Jan/Feb, 1984.

TEACHER'S IDEA MARKET

Keeping in mind that 1984-85 is the year designated to feature Writing Across the Curriculum, this idea from Stephen Tschudi's Writing in the Content Area seemed particularly appropriate. It was adapted and enhanced for presentation here by Stephanie McConachie, Coordinator, Eastern Virginia Writing Project.

A Content Dialogue

Students working alone or in pairs will make up a dialogue from any subject they are studying. It will feature an interviewing announcer like Tom Brokaw and a subject to be interviewed from the chosen content area. For example, if the student chooses history as the subject, a possible interview might be like the script of an 1836 press conference between Andrew Jackson and a reporter interested in finding out why he did not favor a national bank. If science is the focus, the student would choose a subject such as Gregor Mendel, asking what led him to his hypothesis about genetics, etc.

Guidelines: Students should select ideas or concepts from subjects they are studying, and the concepts should have the potential for conflict. Students should jot down basic ideas to cover in the interview and do some experimental drafting to get the flow of ideas. Later, cultural details and appropriate phrases and language could be added. Finally, students could present their dialogues orally or on tape.

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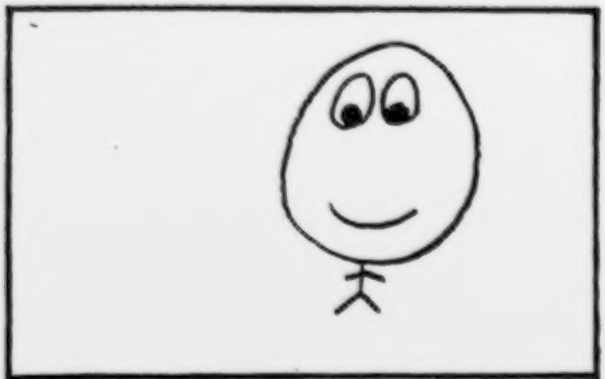
Another idea that can be adapted for use across the curriculum was contributed by Barbara P. Griffin, a teacher at Phoebus High School in Hampton.

Charting Individual Reading Progress

When students seem to be neglecting their individualized reading, a simple chart can remendy the problem. Write each student's first name on a large sheet of construction paper and mark off at least a week with two sections for each day. When students read during a class period, ask them to record on the chart the numbers of the first and last pages they read during that day. It is helpful to provide a little class time each day for reading. This prompts good readers to excel so they can post their progress, and weak readers usually accept the challenge to speed up their rates.

From THE NEEDLE'S EYE, the Newsletter of the Virginia Association of Teachers of English, Vol 6, No. 3, September 1984.



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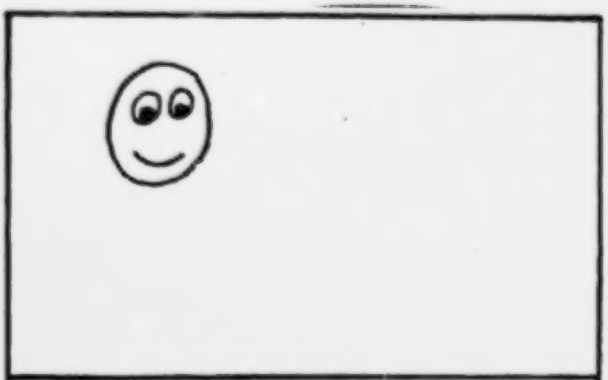

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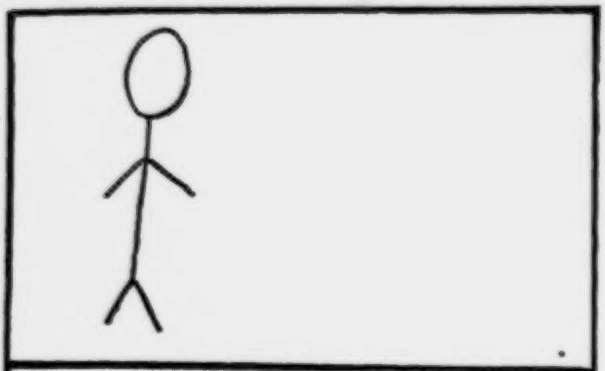

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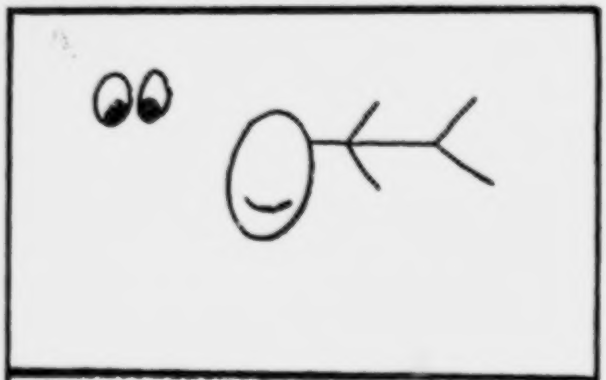

Organization?

Jacquelyn Hart
Pima Community College
Tucson, Arizona

WHIM IV
CALL FOR PAPERS
HUMOR ACROSS THE DISCIPLINES
revised 7/10/84

The fourth national WHIM humor conference will be held on the Arizona State University Campus from March 29 to April 1, 1985. The theme will be "Humor Across the Disciplines." We would appreciate receiving your proposal as soon as possible, as this is a stone-soup conference and the sooner your ingredients begin to simmer, the tastier the soup will be. The final deadline for proposals is January 1, 1985. We are sending a list of proposals already submitted to help you in preparing your own proposal. Your proposal should include all of the following: 1). A $35.00 registration fee, 2). A one-page abstract, and 3). Two subjects your paper could be cross-listed under. Send to Don and Alleen Nilsen; WHIM Conferences; English Dept; ASU; Tempe, AZ 85287.

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WHIM IV APPLICATION FORM

NAME: ______________________ DEPARTMENT: ______________

AFFILIATION: ______________________________________

ADDRESS: ____________________________ ZIP: __________

TITLE OF PRESENTATION: ______________________________

TWO SUBJECTS OF PRESENTATION: (NOTE: This is an interdisciplinary conference: SUBJECT #1: ______________ SUBJECT #2: ______________

CHECK LIST

_____CHECK if you have enclosed the $35.00 registration fee. This fee entitles you to attend the entire conference, to have your presenttion excerpted in the conference proceedings, and to a coy of the WHIMSY IV proceedings. Proposals will not be considered if the fee is not enclosed.

_____CHECK if this is the 1st WHIM conference you have attended.

_____CHECK if you have enclosed a one-page abstract of your presentation on "HUMOR ACROSS THE DISCIPLINES."

_____CHECK if you have any AUDIO-VISUAL needs. Please note that only "usual audio-visual equipment can be provided.

_____CHECK if you would like to be placed on the mailing list to receive information about future WHIM conferences.